

ORLANDO Attractions

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Diagon Alley

COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

The New
Wizarding World
is Now Open ...
and Awesome!

Disney Legend Plans
a New Theme Park

Top 10 Things To Do
in Diagon Alley

PLUS

Games, Cartoons,
Rumors, Dining,
Updates & More!

New Four Seasons Resort
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ON THE COVER:

Guests stop in their tracks when the Diagon Alley dragon breathes fire. Photo by Jack Crouse.

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THESE STORIES AND MORE...

In addition to the stories and photos in this magazine, check our website regularly for even more, plus many videos. Stay up-to-date with all the latest theme park and attraction news through our weekly video shows, download our free iPhone/iPad apps and sign up for our free e-mail newsletter.

SEE WHAT 'FROZEN' THINGS DO IN SUMMER



Anna, Elsa, Kristoff and their friends hosted a Frozen Summer Fun Live event this summer at Disney's Hollywood Studios. The popular event was extended through the end of September and featured experiences such as: "For The First Time In Forever: A 'Frozen' Sing-Along Celebration", ice skating inside

Wandering Oaken's Frozen Funland, a parade and a fireworks finale. Be sure to check out our gallery of the event, videos from our Youtube Frozen Playlist and a segment dedicated to Frozen Summer Fun on the July 31 episode of The Show.



GO INSIDE DIAGON ALLEY



Although we have a ton of coverage in this issue, there is a ton more videos and photos to see from inside The Wizarding World of Harry Potter - Diagon Alley on our website and our YouTube Wizarding World playlist. You'll see interviews with celebrities and get a look around the entire area. For a complete overview, check out the June 26 episode of The Show.



EXPERIENCE THE MARVEL UNIVERSE LIVE

Featuring the most Marvel characters ever assembled in one production, Marvel Universe Live arena spectacular puts fans right in the middle of an electrifying battle between good and evil. View our coverage from a dress rehearsal here in Central Florida in a photo gallery on our website, videos on our Youtube channel and a segment dedicated to the event on the July 10 episode of The Show. Don't forget to see Marvel Universe Live when it comes a town near you during the two-year North American tour.



LIVE FROM THE PARKS

Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/attractions and our Facebook page at facebook.com/attractionsmagazine. We frequently post on-the-spot information, photos and short videos while we're inside Orlando's theme parks. You can also be notified of our latest videos if you subscribe to our YouTube channel at youtube.com/attractionsmagazine.



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FROM THE EDITOR



As you'll soon see, in addition to our usual sections, this issue is dedicated to The Wizarding World of Harry Potter - Diagon Alley. As the cover

says, it's awesome! All of our staff members love the new areas and the new rides, even those who aren't big Harry Potter fans. Universal has done an amazing job in creating a truly immersive and detailed environment. If you haven't been, we suggest you start planning a visit. It sets the bar high for all future theme park environments for all theme park companies.

Our other big story this week is about a planned theme park in Texas. You may be thinking "Texas? Isn't this 'Orlando Attractions Magazine'?" It's being developed by many theme park talents right here in Orlando. If all their plans come to fruition, not only will this theme park be another game changer, much like Diagon Alley, but it will be a destination attraction for people all over the world. We hope to continue to follow its progress in future issues.

Have Fun,
Matt Roseboom
Editor/Publisher

We encourage everyone to send their best theme park and Orlando vacation photos to us. We especially like the ones that come with a story to go with them.

DISNEY DREAM

I love your show because ever since I was little, I have always been in love with theme parks, especially Disney World. While growing up, I moved all over the world. My family and I are from Norway, and since my dad works for an oil company, we've lived in Scotland, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Cairo and now Houston, Texas. I always saw the amazing images and videos of Disney World while growing up, and it had been my ultimate dream to visit, and I did in 2010. My dream after college is to work at Disney!

I just want to thank all of you guys so much for giving people like me the joy of theme parks information and news! I am just in love with it!

Jonathan Algeroy
Houston, Texas

the parks, all from Nebraska. As you know, the Disney magazine stopped production some years ago. I was sad until I found a great replacement, "Orlando Attractions Magazine"! My son and I were thrilled to meet Matt and Banks and watch the filming of your show. Now my son (Harrison) wants to work for you.

Bob Condello
Omaha, Neb.

For those of you who don't know, we film "Orlando Attractions Magazine - The Show" just about every Wednesday morning on our set at Theme Park Connection. We encourage everyone to come out to meet us. Besides seeing a show taping live, you could spend hours looking at all the cool things for sale at the store.

CORRECTION

When I finished reading the summer 2014 issue of your magazine, I noticed a photo of three characters on the "Lights, Camera, Attraction" page. In the caption

was a little joke about Stitch, Mary Poppins and Cruella De Vil on a train in the Magic Kingdom. One small problem, Cruella De Vil is not in the picture. The woman who you thought was Cruella is in fact Lady Tremaine, or Cinderella's step-mother. Just thought I would point that out to you. I love your magazine by the way. I'm a huge Disney enthusiast and know everything there is to know about the Disney parks.

Logan Carey
Albany, N. Y.

MAGAZINE PICS

At Christmas we sent in a photo of a Hidden Mickey we found in our Christmas cookies and yesterday we opened the magazine that came in the mail - and there was our pic! OMG, we are still soooo excited, especially my kids, who are teenagers.

I know it's your job to select pics but I just wanted to say thanks and tell you how much we enjoy the magazine and how much we all enjoyed seeing our own pic in the magazine.

We have been visiting Orlando every Christmas holiday since the kids were born (they are 17 and 18) and for the last 10 years have been visiting a second time each year for the water parks in mid-summer.

Lu Ann Soul
Hanover, Penn.



FUTURE ATTRACTIONS HOST

Hi. This past week I was in Orlando with my family and for the first time visited my favorite ebay store, Theme Park Connection. I am a huge Disney fan, so huge in fact that this was my 76th visit to

Yes, we noticed that mistake right after all the issues had been printed. Sorry about that. Thank you for letting us know. Lady Tremaine was not too happy about it either. We hope she doesn't make us clean her manor.



We asked our Facebook fans: “Do you think Universal Orlando should expand the Wizarding World even more? If so, what area should be next?”

Ricardo Galarza

I don't think so. I want to go to Universal Studios, movies related theme park. Not Warner Bros. Studios or Harry Potter Theme Park.

Martin Smith

Not without also heavily expanding both parks too. By expansion, that's build new things, not retheme existing attractions.

Christopher Dornenburg

Yes! Ministry of Magic would be awesome!

Manda Ree

If Universal is planning on adding more to it, they need to just drop the Universal name altogether and call the thing Harry Potter Land or something. Universal to me went downhill when they dropped Nickelodeon studios in favor of Blue Man Group. Why don't they bring that back instead of milking the cash cow that is Harry Potter? Universal owns so many franchises people would go crazy for if only they gave them the chance. Rant over.

Matthew Twilley

Only if it gets rid of Fear Factor Live somehow.

AJ Danna

No. Harry Potter is not a Universal property, and using it as their main source of income/advertising, while still maintaining the Universal name, just doesn't seem right to their history. Instead of adding more Potter, Universal should enhance effects and other features of the attractions that scream “Universal” for long-time fans, such as E.T. Adventure. That way, the classic Universal fans have something to be happy about, too.

Zack Koch

No! It's too big already! If they do that, it might as well just be a theme park for Harry Potter!

Grace Quandt

Yes! Of course, keep it coming! I would love the Ministry of Magic (even the entrance through the Loo would be awesome) I would also love a more detailed 12 Grimmauld Place!

Grace Quandt

To have another Hogwarts would be weird, maybe a way to experience it more indepth without having to go on the ride. Shrieking Shack would be neat, I would be interested to see what they could do with it.

Gérôme Henriey

I think it's about time for them to stop with Harry Potter. There's so much more to do and so many attractions to update!

Michael Phaneuf

No. There is plenty of room for HP right now. They should focus on updating/replacing older attractions like MIB or Disaster. Or expand to bring back King Kong

Anthony Bonacolta

No, even though I'm a huge Harry Potter fan. I feel like they have enough there already. If they are going to expand then they should start incorporating other franchises into the parks in order to reach everyone's interests.

Robby Ciabattoni

I am probably one of the biggest HP fans around, but even I know when enough is enough. With the addition of Diagon Alley and the Hogwarts Express, the Wizarding World now feels complete, and I feel Universal should move on from Harry Potter right now and create new, original attractions.

Roxann Selby Capehart

Yes, they should build a hotel with Harry Potter themed rooms! That would be amazing!

Otto Tieleman

Sure, I would love to see the horrible Fear Factor show leave for the Ministry of Magic. I would like to see a dueling wizard show in there with lots of illusions and special effects.

Chris Franklin

Expand it and finish off the story then focus on new ventures. When I get my first visit in 2016, I plan to do it from Diagon Alley to Hogsmeade like in the books.

Raymond Yuhasz

I think the latest addition of Diagon Alley should be enough to make Harry Potter fans happy for a while. With Jurassic World coming to theaters in the summer it should be a perfect excuse/reason to expand, update and reimagine Jurassic Park. A new thrill ride there would be epic!

Jane Weimann

Definitely! The Weasley family home! Actually, I believe Universal could have created an entire separate park dedicated to Harry Potter. It would be enjoyable for Harry Potter fans as well as individuals that are not familiar with the books and movies.

Becky Hoh

Maybe not right now, but I would love to visit the Ministry of Magic or the graveyard featured in Goblet of Fire sometime in the future. Poseidon's Fury needs to be updated, so does Fear Factor Live. You know what would be really cool inside Poseidon's building? The battle between Voldemort and Dumbledore that was at the end of Order of the Phoenix. Just saying ...

Matthew Bissell

No as I think it will become too Wizarding World heavy and Universal should work on new rides that are based on new movies such as building a new land or improving the attractions they have currently. I think Universal Orlando Resort is fast becoming “Harry Potter World”

instead of the other attractions/lands that Universal owns the property to.

Kimberly Masimore

While I love the Harry Potter series I would rather see them develop another land unless their goal is to create an entire Harry Potter park (which I'm not gonna lie - sounds super fun!) I'd like to see an entire Jurassic Park land. How cool would it be to walk amongst the dinosaurs!

Mike Jackson

Leave it and focus on another movie. The movie industry does not revolve around Harry Potter.

Heather Burelle

No, I think Harry Potter is a big enough presence. If they wanted to do an updated Jaws ride though, I wouldn't be opposed.

Brianna Yuhasz

I say The Wizarding World of Harry Potter is awesome just the way it is! Universal should start expanding a different part of the park first, and maybe in the future add on to it.

Brian Nussbaum

No because it already covered most of the stuff from Harry Potter so it should not expand. The next area should be Family Guy or Willy Wonka.

Erik Sabin

No, it doesn't make sense. Sure Harry Potter is a very lucrative franchise, but five years from now? Ten years from now? They need to think about the next big franchise and do something with that.

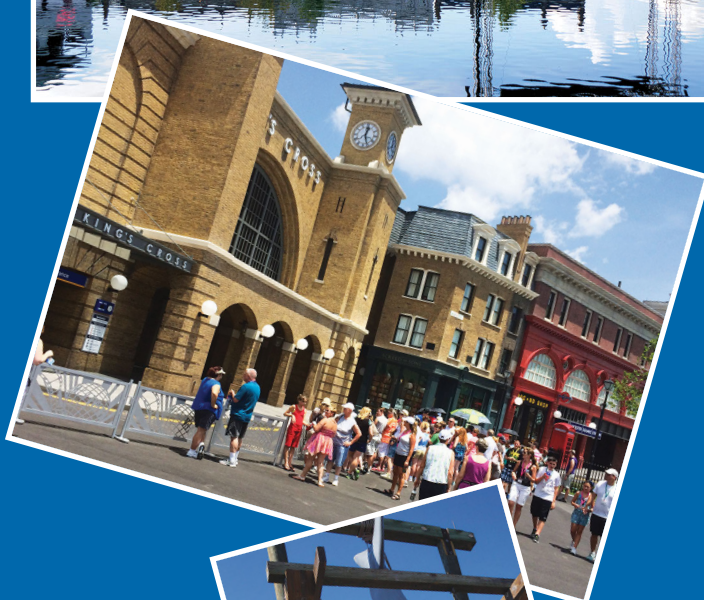
Jake Dicke

No. I feel its time to focus on other things. Personally, I would like to see ET refreshed with a more modern look and feel, a Jaws reboot, an increase in Jurassic Park themed areas and maybe some additions to the superhero section of IOA.

THEN ...



AND NOW ...



Even though most fans love Diagon Alley, many were not happy with its placement because it meant the end of the Jaws ride and the whole Amity area. Our "Then" photos give a look across the lake at the former fishing village of Amity, where it was always the Fourth of July. Now when you look across the lake while standing in The Simpsons' Springfield, you'll see all the way to London. As you'll read later in this issue, Universal Creative members also hated to see Jaws disappear, so they added a few tributes in Diagon Alley and London. Once in a while you may see someone walking through the new London waterfront wearing a Jaws T-shirt as their own personal tribute. But all is not lost, guests can still get their photo with Jaws in the San Francisco area of the park.

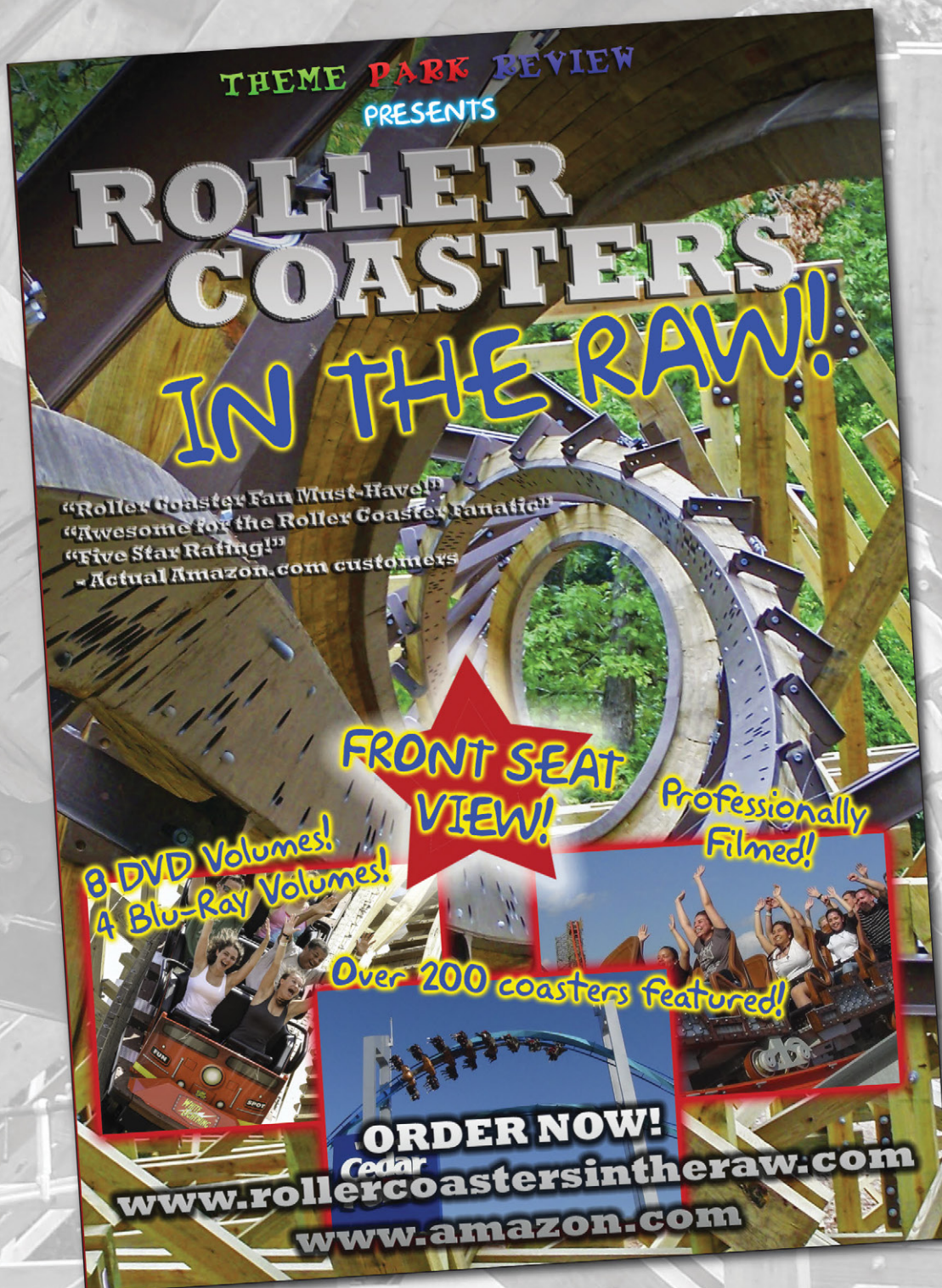
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Vacation Planner



By Anthony Armenia

HOWL-O-SCREAM

Location: Busch Gardens Tampa

Dates: Friday and Saturday, Sept. 26 and 27; every Thursday, Friday and Saturday from Oct. 2 to Nov. 1; Sunday, Oct. 19

Cost: \$30 to \$89

A sinister song in perfect pitch curses all who hear its tormenting tempo. Try to survive the curse or spread it at this year's Howl-O-Scream featuring a brand new haunted house, five returning houses with a twist, roaming slash mobs, a cursed front gate experience and more.



MICKEY'S NOT SO SCARY HALLOWEEN PARTY

Location: Magic Kingdom

Dates: Sept. 1, 9, 12, 14, 16, 19, 21, 23, 26, 28; Oct. 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28, 30, 31

Cost: \$58 to \$77

This event invites kids of all ages to celebrate Halloween by trick-or-treating in the park, enjoying select attractions (including the new Seven Dwarfs Mine Train), and watching Halloween fireworks and a special parade. Don't forget to meet and greet with some of your favorite Disney characters, only out for special events including Tarzan and Jane, Jack Skellington and Sally and some Disney baddies.

HALLOWEEN HORROR NIGHTS

Location: Universal Studios

Dates: Sept. 19-20, 25-28; Oct. 2-5, 9-12, 15-19, 22-26, 29-31 & Nov. 1

Cost: \$41.99 to \$95.99

Your worst nightmares take shape featuring all-new haunted houses, spine-tingling scare zones, live shows and much more. Halloween Horror Nights 24 haunted houses and street experiences include: AMC's The Walking Dead, Alien Vs. Predator and The Purge.

HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR

Location: SeaWorld Orlando

Dates: Every weekend, Oct. 4 to 26

Cost: Included with theme park admission
Kids of all ages can enjoy all there is to offer at SeaWorld as they trick-or-treat around the park, meet some Halloween sea creatures and watch special Halloween themed shows.



BRICK OR TREAT

Location: Legoland Florida

Dates: Every Saturday and Sunday in October

Cost: Included with theme park admission
During Brick-or-Treat, ghouls, ghosts and goblins will descend on Miniland USA, transforming it into a fun, haunted scavenger hunt featuring trick or treating and much more.

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Busch Gardens Tampa
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We've chosen our favorite upcoming events to spotlight. You don't want to miss them on your next trip to Orlando.

All events and dates are subject to change. Please check with the proper organization before attending.
Check our calendar section at AttractionsMagazine.com for up-to-date happenings in the Orlando area.

SEAWORLD'S CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Location: SeaWorld Orlando

Dates: Select dates from Nov. 22 through Dec. 31

Cost: Included with theme park admission
Celebrate the season SeaWorld style featuring everything from Santa to Shamu, including The Polar Express Experience, an ice skating show, a sparkling sea of trees, a Sesame Street Christmas show and a holiday-themed animal show.



CHRISTMAS BRICKTACULAR

Location: Legoland Florida

Dates: Weekends in December

Cost: Included with theme park admission
'Tis the season for Christmas Bricktacular with a 270,000 brick Christmas tree, festive decorations and daily appearances by Santa.

CHRISTMAS TOWN

Location: Busch Gardens Tampa

Dates: Select dates from Nov. 28 through Dec. 31

Cost: Included with park admission
Celebrate the season with more than 20 Christmas attractions, snow, shows, rides, dining and shopping options and themed areas throughout the park.

MICKEY'S VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS PARTY

Location: Magic Kingdom

Dates: Nov. 8, 11, 14, 15, 17, 21, 22;
Dec. 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 20

Cost: \$53 to \$67

Celebrate the holiday season the Disney way, with free hot cocoa and cookies, holiday themed shows, a special parade and fireworks, and falling snow on Main Street with your favorite characters dressed in their winter outfits.

INTERNATIONAL FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL

Location: Epcot

Dates: Sept. 19 to Nov. 10

Cost: Included with theme park admission
Go on a culinary journey around the world without leaving Orlando. The event includes food, wine, beer, culinary classes, parties and a live concert series. New in 2014: Patagonia Marketplace, Farm Fresh Marketplace, new dishes at Brazil and Polish Marketplaces and celebrity events.



HOLIDAYS AT UNIVERSAL ORLANDO

Location: Universal Orlando Resort

Dates: Dec. 6 through Jan. 3

Cost: Included with theme park admission
Experience the holidays from a Who's point of view at Islands of Adventure's Grinchmas, featuring the musical adaptation of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." Over at Universal Studios, guests can enjoy the Macy's Holiday Parade with floats and balloons from the famous Macy's Parade, and performances by Mannheim Steamroller on select dates.



HOLIDAYS AT WALT DISNEY WORLD

Location: Magic Kingdom, Hollywood Studios & Epcot

Dates: Magic Kingdom TBA; Hollywood Studios Nov. 7-Jan. 4; Epcot Nov. 28-Dec. 30.

Cost: Included with theme park admission
Experience a wild holiday with the Jingle Cruise, as a classic attraction adds holiday jokes, props and even new names for the boats. Holidays lights will take over the backlot of Disney's Hollywood Studios as part of the annual "Osborne Family Spectacle of Dancing Lights." At Epcot, experience holiday traditions around the world with a Christmas story narrated by a celebrity guest each and every night.

STATUS: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

CityWalk Welcomes New Tastes and Treats

LOCATION: CITYWALK ORLANDO

The major expansion is almost complete with the recent openings of Menchie's, Bread Box, Hot Dog Hall of Fame and Vivo Italian Kitchen. The only restaurant left to open is The Cowfish which is under construction. The Universal Studio Store recently reopened as well with a brand-new design.



STATUS: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Eateries and Stores Springing Up

LOCATION: DOWNTOWN DISNEY

Construction continues at the future Disney Springs. These past few months welcomed the opening of multiple stores and eateries including two new Starbucks, Marketplace Co-Op and United World of Soccer. When complete in 2016, Disney Springs will double the shopping, dining and entertainment experiences they now have and be themed to Florida's waterfront towns and natural beauty.



STATUS: NOW SLIDING

Go on an Aqua Drag Race

LOCATION: WET 'N WILD

The Aqua Drag Racer slide recently opened. It towers six stories high and propels guests through four lanes of head-to-head competition at 15 feet per second before splashing them across the finish line. Guests take their mark, then power through enclosed braided, twisting tunnels as they accelerate into four parallel racing lanes. The new ride replaces the Bubba Tub.



STATUS: CLOSED

Pirate Island Occupied

LOCATION: SEAWORLD ORLANDO

After a 15-year run, "Clyde and Seamore Take Pirate Island" had its last show in August. It was SeaWorld's longest-running show. Clyde and Seamore will be returning next summer for a new show, rumored to be themed to Sea Lion High School. No word on the status of the pre-show mime.



STATUS: NOW OPEN

Retro Shopping

LOCATION: UNIVERSAL STUDIOS FLORIDA

A new store recently opened in the former television preview center across from the Transformers attraction entrance. "The Film Vault" features merchandise you can't find at other Universal Orlando stores. Including, but not limited to, merchandise themed after former attractions such as King Kong, Jaws, Ghostbusters and Back To The Future.



NOW OPEN

Feel the Fury and Get Furry

LOCATION: BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA

After construction delays, Falcon's Fury, a one-of-a-kind free standing drop tower, has opened. The rest of the new vibrant Pantopia area is also open featuring new eats, stores, decorations and a fresh paint scheme to go along with it. Pantopia Theatre is also presenting a brand new animal themed show, Opening Night Critters.



PHOTO BY MATT HOPKINS-BGTFANS.COM

STATUS: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Getting Ready to Color the Sunshine State

LOCATION: THE FLORIDA MALL

The Crayola Experience, a colorful family attraction will open next summer featuring 25 hands-on attractions. Families will be able to enjoy many attractions including "Wrap it Up!" where you can name and wrap an authentic Crayola crayon and "Be a Star," where you can star in your very own coloring page. The attraction will also have a store where guests will discover hundreds of Crayola products. While the admission price hasn't been set yet, their current location in Pennsylvania charges \$20 per person with children under two free.



STATUS: NOW OPEN

Going Green

LOCATION: LEGOLAND FLORIDA

In partnership with Tampa Electric, the park has unveiled a new six-foot Lego Globe in the Imagination Zone to further education on renewable energy. The new interactive area also includes Lego mini-model communities and demonstrations of solar panels, which are now solely powering the Imagination Zone area of the park.



STATUS: CUSTOMIZED

For the First Time in Forever, MagicBand Designs

LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORT

Disney World has launched the first specialty-designed MagicBands. Initially Star Wars Weekends featured themed Yoda and Darth Vader MagicBands,. Disney later launched Anna, Elsa and Olaf themed MagicBands as well. Now they've released a Haunted Mansion one for the Halloween season. The MagicBands are limited and sold at a premium. Some of these MagicBands also make special noises when scanned at MyMagic+ stations.

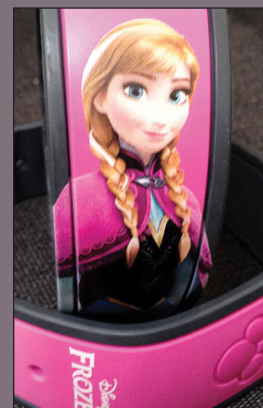


PHOTO BY THEPARKREVIEW.COM



STATUS: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Down with the Arch

LOCATION: UNIVERSAL'S ISLANDS OF ADVENTURE

The Jurassic Park entry arch closest to Toon Lagoon was recently removed and just behind it is a new large construction site. Speculation points to a King Kong themed Skull Island attraction. There is no official word yet.



STATUS: COMING SOON/CLOSING

Old World Italian Favorites

LOCATION: DISNEY'S BOARDWALK RESORT

Trattoria al Forno, a new Italian restaurant will be opening by the end of the year. "Trattoria" is an Italian restaurant serving simple food, and "al forno" means "food baked in an oven". The new restaurant will showcase Old World techniques including handcrafted mozzarella made daily, a variety of Neapolitan-style pizzas and other Italian favorites. Trattoria al Forno will replace Kouzzina by Cat Cora and will service breakfast and dinner.



STATUS: NOW RECORDING

Capture Your Tower of Terror Experience on Video

LOCATION: DISNEY'S HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS

Last month, Walt Disney World debuted their first ever on-ride videos as part of the new MyMagic+ system. The first attraction to receive on-ride video was Tower of Terror. Seven Dwarfs Mine Train and Haunted Mansion are rumored to follow. The on-ride video is currently only available to guests with a MagicBand and linked Memory Maker photo package.



PHOTO BY DISNEY, COURTESY OF JEFF REISDORF

STATUS: NEW PAINT JOB

The Future is Looking Red and Orange

LOCATION: MAGIC KINGDOM

The Tomorrowland Transit Authority PeopleMover reopened recently after a two-month refurbishment with a new paint scheme. The new orange and red color paint does not appear to be complete yet as sections are still not painted, but should be completed along with the refurbishment of the Astro Orbiter soon.



STATUS: CLOSED

No More Golden Tickets

LOCATION: DISNEY'S HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS

After more than five years, The American Idol Experience had its last performance at the end of August. More than 2,000 dream tickets were given out to guests and on this past season of American Idol alone, three of the Top 13 contestants were discovered through The American Idol Experience. There is no word on a replacement show for the theater.



STATUS: LIVE

Universal Orlando Goes Mobile

LOCATION: UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT

Guests visiting the parks have a new way to plan their day on their mobile devices and can now do so using the new park-wide Wi-Fi. Universal's new app provides attraction wait times while in the park, alerts when wait times reach a certain time, interactive maps and more. The app is available free on Apple and Android mobile devices. The Wi-Fi is also free.



STATUS: COMING SOON/NOW CLOSED

Final Arrangements Are Being Made

LOCATION: MAGIC KINGDOM

This fall, 999 happy haunts are taking over the former Yankee Trader shop in Liberty Square. The new Haunted Mansion store, inspired by Madame Leota, will feature select items from the Haunted Mansion line including apparel, home goods, souvenirs and more.



STATUS: NOW OPEN

Visit Golgotha Hill

LOCATION: THE HOLY LAND EXPERIENCE

Situated in the middle of the 16-acre park, Golgotha: The Skull exhibit has opened. It is designed to recreate the historic place in the biblical land of Israel where Jesus Christ was crucified and died. The exhibit was built atop another exhibit, the recreation of the biblical Garden Tomb, where the body of Jesus was laid after his crucifixion.



PHOTO BY HOLY LAND EXPERIENCE

STATUS: NOW OPEN

Take a Trip to Duplo Valley

LOCATION: LEGOLAND FLORIDA

Duplo Valley opened earlier this summer bringing the Lego Duplo line of preschool building toys to life with new family themed attractions, an air-conditioned play area and a water play area, all geared towards toddlers. New attractions include Duplo Train, Duplo Tractor and Duplo Barn.



STATUS: PLANNED

Shamu Gets a New Home

LOCATION: SEAWORLD PARKS

SeaWorld Entertainment announced plans to build new, first-of-its kind killer whale environments at all three SeaWorld parks. The first will open in SeaWorld San Diego in 2018 with new killer whale homes to follow in Orlando and San Antonio. These projects will feature a fast water current that allows whales to swim against the moving water, innovative homes for the killer whales (doubling in size) and unique guest encounters. SeaWorld also pledged \$10 million to fund new programs to protect ocean health and killer whales in the wild.



STATUS: NOW RACING

Ride in a Piston Cup Race Car

LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD
SPEEDWAY

The Aiken Axler and Sage VanDerSpin Cars are being used in the new Piston Cup Junior Ride-Along program at Richard Petty Driving Experience. For just \$59, the Junior Ride-Along program gives children ages 6 to 13 (and at least 48 inches tall) the chance to experience real-life racing excitement as they ride shotgun with a professional driving instructor in a specially equipped Cars Piston Cup race car.



STATUS: NOW OPEN

B(eautiful) Resort Opens

LOCATION: DOWNTOWN DISNEY AREA

B Resort recently opened delivering chic, family-friendly experiences. This full service hotel features 394 rooms, a full service B Indulged Spa, B Active Fitness Center, American Q restaurant and more on Hotel Plaza Boulevard.



STATUS: RISING SOON

Look to the Skies

LOCATION:
INTERNATIONAL
DRIVE

The world's tallest coaster is coming to Skyplex, a \$200 million development including a tower-top restaurant, observation deck, ground level-stores and a 1,500-car parking garage. Dubbed Skyscraper, the tower coaster will rise 570 feet above Orlando and will send guests spiraling down at 65 mph. Skyplex is supposed to open in 2016 and ticket prices are said to be under \$20 for unlimited rides.



Photo Finds

Orlando is always filled with fun things to see and our photographers are there to capture it all.

Visit our Website for videos and a gallery of more photos.
AttractionsMagazine.com

LeakyCon was held at the **Orange County Convention Center** from July 30 to Aug. 3 and featured **cosplaying fans**, celebrities, shopping and shows. The event started many years ago as a convention for Harry Potter fans, but they added fandom such as Doctor Who, Twilight and others over the years. After this year's event, the organizers announced they are splitting into two events. **GeekyCon** will continue covering all fandoms and will return to Orlando next year, and LeakyCon will go back to its roots and only cover Harry Potter. No date or location has been announced for the next LeakyCon.



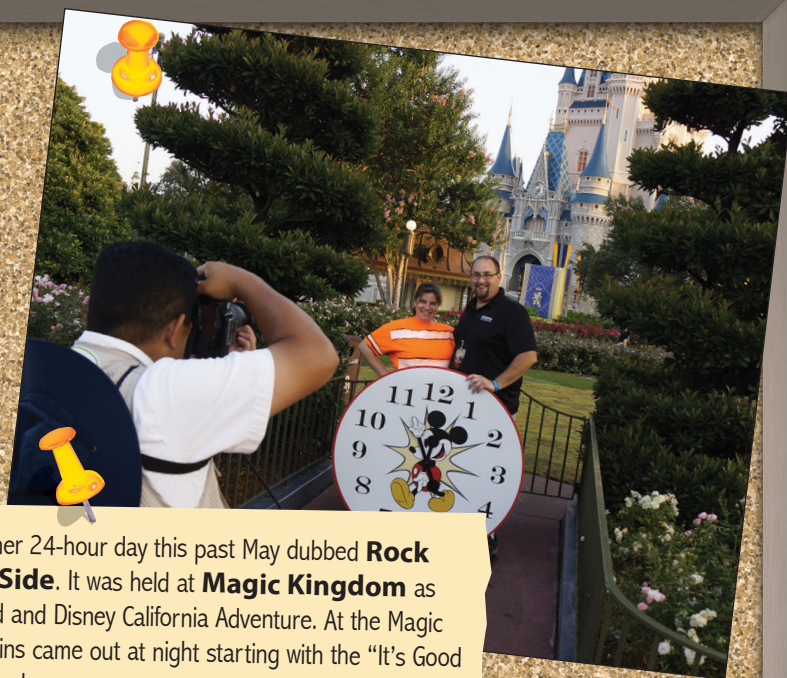
The 21st Annual **Mascot Games** came to the **Amway Arena** in July. The lighthearted games bring mascots together from different sports around the country to compete and raise money for the New Hope for Kids charity.



PHOTOS BY QUINN ROSEBOOM



The **Nickelodeon Suites Resort** had a **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle** summer with two big events. In June, the **original cartoon voice actors** visited the hotel to meet and talk with guests, along with the first ever appearance of the April O'Neil and Foot Clan characters. Then in August, the Nick Hotel set a **Guinness World Record** for the most people dressed as the TMNTs in one location.



Disney held another 24-hour day this past May dubbed **Rock Your Disney Side**. It was held at **Magic Kingdom** as well as Disneyland and Disney California Adventure. At the Magic Kingdom, the villains came out at night starting with the "It's Good to Be Bad" cavalcade.



For one night only in August, **Disney's Hollywood Studios** hosted a special-ticket event called **Villains Unleashed**. The night featured special shows, fireworks and more than 50 villain characters for guests to meet, including the first appearance of **Star-Lord and Gamora** from "Guardians of the Galaxy" and **Constantine** from "Muppets Most Wanted".



Disney's Hollywood Studios was the home of **Frozen Summer Fun**, which included a Royal Welcome, sing-along, ice skating, Frozen fireworks show and more. The event was originally announced to end on Sept. 1, but it was extended through the end of September.

THE WIZARDING WORLD OF HARRY POTTER DIAGON ALLEY VS. HOGSMEADE

ENTERTAINMENT



Both lands feature short stage shows; Hogsmeade showcases the Triwizard Spirit Rally and a performance by the Frog Choir, while Diagon Alley has The Tales of Beetle the Bard and a performance by Celestina Warbeck and the Banshees. While the shows in Hogsmeade are well done, Diagon Alley's offerings feature impressive puppetry and choreography that uses any and all physical space around the stage.

FOOD & BEVERAGE



Both lands feature a large sit down restaurant, and both have several places to buy Butterbeer, drinks and snacks throughout their land. But the element that helps Diagon Alley pull ahead of Hogsmeade is the addition of Florean Fortescue's Ice-Cream Parlour. It features several different unique flavors such as Chocolate Chili and Butterbeer.

RIDES



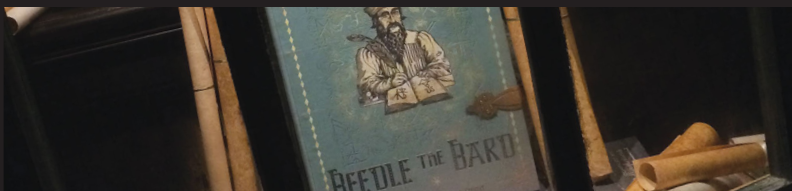
The signature attractions for both lands, Escape from Gringotts and Forbidden Journey, were game changers when they first opened. As great as the new Escape from Gringotts is in Diagon Alley, the addition of two other rides in Hogsmeade and the numerous physical sets inside Forbidden Journey give that land the edge.

SHOPS



When it comes to finding the perfect souvenir to take home, Diagon Alley has the best selection of shops. While Hogsmeade has three shops, Diagon Alley features seven that each cater to a certain theme from the Potterverse.

WAND INTERACTIVITY



One of the new elements in the Wizarding World that recently debuted is the ability to purchase an interactive wand and perform spells at various locations in both Diagon Alley and Hogsmeade. The biggest assortment of interactivity locations can be found throughout Diagon Alley, including some hidden ones not on the map.

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Inside the Creative Heart of Universal's Wizardry with Mark Woodbury and Thierry Coup

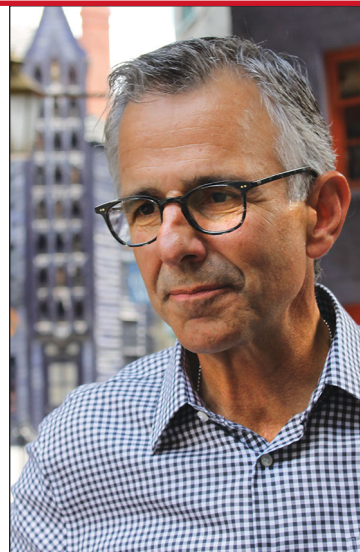
Harry Potter is the biggest thing to hit Orlando since the Mouse arrived in 1971, and the new Diagon Alley area of Universal Studios is the hottest spot in town. Why? It's all down to the immense level of detail that leaves visitors breathless and utterly convinced they have entered the realm of the most famous wizard in the world.

We sat down with Thierry Coup, senior vice president of Universal Creative, and Mark Woodbury, president of Universal Creative, for their insights into the process of bringing The Wizarding World of Harry Potter - Diagon Alley to life.

Hogwarts Castle was the obvious choice to begin telling the Wizarding World of Harry Potter story. What inspired you to choose Diagon Alley next?

Thierry: Hogwarts/Hogsmeade had to be first, but it was clear instantly with the response we got that we should bring Diagon Alley to life. We listened to the guests, the fans, and the blogs, and Diagon Alley was the story they wanted.

We started to look at designs next to Hogsmeade and quickly realized it needed separation; you can't just walk from Scotland to London. We wanted to create distance between Hogsmeade and Diagon Alley so we could stay true to the fiction, but how could we place it far enough away to create a journey in between? We realized if we found space in Universal Studios it would be ideal. Jaws was a huge piece of land and while it was doing OK, it wasn't in tip-top shape. It's a straight shot for a train ride from there to Hogsmeade. There



PHOTOS BY SIMON VENESS

Universal's cleverly creative duo, Thierry Coup, left, and Mark Woodbury, right, are all smiles at the official opening of Diagon Alley.

were no tight turns, so that's how we started looking at the track for the Hogwarts Express.

Mark: As soon as we completed Hogsmeade, we knew there were other adventures to take people on and other stories to tell. We had two parks to tell that story, and put them together with the Hogwarts Express. Once we looked into that, the rest was the selection of the iconography and the reality of the space. The interactive wands were also a big deal for us and the Gringotts ride was something we knew was waiting to happen.

With Gringotts Bank as an established focal point, how did you choose which other areas to include?

Thierry: We reviewed all the references already in the films, but we didn't have

Carkitt Market and we didn't know where Knockturn Alley fitted within Diagon Alley. You would see snatches of it in the films but it didn't give a concise, definite frame of reference. So our group came up with the overall layout and then we met with film Production Designer Stuart Craig, who made some tweaks. We spent about eight months at the Shepperton Studios and set up the whole art department for Stuart to develop this incredible vision. The new Carkitt Market area was inspired by Borough Market in Southwark, and in the movies they filmed the brick wall scene right across from Borough Market, so there was an obvious connection, and that was important to Stuart. He was hoping to bring it into the films at some point, so it's cool we were able to do it with Diagon Alley. When we brought the



The exterior of the new Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios consists of a series of Stuart Craig's iconic views of modern London, which serve as the overall facade behind which lurk the real delights of Diagon Alley.

Gringotts ride to life in the concept stage, the whole thing was to place us in one of the most powerful moments in Harry's life, but this time we are looking at it from a different point of view.

The fire-breathing dragon has become Diagon Alley's icon. Was it always part of the plan?

Thierry: Stuart Craig built a detailed large-scale art director's model of Diagon Alley and we started to push buildings in and tweak it, and make it all look old. We were standing by the model and (Harry Potter movies producer) David Heyman and Stuart just looked at it and said, 'How about a dragon on top of Gringotts?' They looked at each other and said, "That would be great!" We had our sculptor, Bryn Court, who did the model, get to work and the dragon was fully sculpted by him. We did hundreds of pages of drawings, all highly detailed because Stuart is into the detail as much as we are.

Mark: When David and Stuart discussed putting a dragon on the top of Gringotts, that was one of those moments when we said "We have to do that!"

How did your designers create such a detailed, convincing representation of London?

Thierry: You have to go through London to get into the story, and what you see is Stuart's vision of the most iconic points. In the books, J.K. Rowling describes the entrance to Diagon Alley as between the Leaky Cauldron and a book store but there is no other real description to provide a firm visual. Instead, Stuart showed us all the places where they filmed and places that inspired them. Our version of London is really warm. There is a real sense of romance to it that we try to enhance, so that the buildings lean a little more and the colors are a little bolder and stronger. The sound of the train was also recorded in London.

The sense of place is immense. Was there anything you were not able to achieve?

Thierry: Stuart created a much more functional street for Diagon Alley in the movies, with the old-style pavers and big holes in the pavement, but we obviously couldn't replicate that as we don't want our

guests falling over, and it needed to be accommodating for families with strollers. So we just tried to give it that look as much as possible without creating holes in it. We had to be practical, but at least 90 percent of the time we were able to do what we wanted to do. We found solutions.

Did you face any challenges in terms of the technology?

Thierry: In Gringotts Bank, we really wanted to bring Bill Weasley and the goblin to life in Bill's office and in order to do it we had to create the technology to make it work. We wanted to make it bigger, wider and more grand than anything we had done with Hogwarts. We had to do something different with the filming technology to allow for the bigger view of the office and to have more interaction with the characters. That was just one example of how we had to create something new to fulfill our vision, but there were plenty of others.

Mark: There are countless learning experiences that happen along the way, whether it is some detail you discover, or a particular fixture you find in an area. We were con-

stantly finding new opportunities to explore them and display them. We learned that people enjoy the discovery and exploration of these experiences as much as they enjoy any particular ride, so we were really fixed on that side of things. Guests look at things like the wardrobe and the interaction of people that inhabit these places, so we are looking to make it a seamless journey. It is what we love to do, and hopefully our guests will enjoy it as much as we do.

What was the process like from start to finish?

Thierry: We hired some of the best craftsmen in visual and special effects, and in 2012 we started to shoot film for the different elements inside Diagon Alley. We did much of the film work at the Warner Brothers studios at Leavesden and some of the producing in London. We worked with a company called Double Negative who did the main visual effects for the filming. We also did all of the construction work and sculpting by hand – there is nothing

you see that is out of a mold. It all has to be proper brick courses and stone-work. We had Alan Gilmore (art director for Harry Potter films and The Wizarding World of Harry Potter) in Orlando and constant visits from Stuart Craig, while we also met regularly with David Heyman, the producer of the films, for his feedback on all the visuals.

Mark: You have to have a master schedule and follow the road map that's getting you from point A to point B, but we do have plenty of experience in this particular field. There are multiple things to keep track of on a daily basis. It is a process, and when you run into road blocks you figure out how to get through them. We wanted to build the world's most expansive theme park experience and the most elaborate thing we had ever done. Diagon Alley is immensely complex. From the architecture to the film-making, they are all on paths that overlap and they have to converge to make the whole. We have an extraordinary team of people who are so proud about what they do. You can't fathom the amount

of dedication and thought and work that goes into this process. I take a unique position in all of this, and I also get the benefit of seeing these sparks of genius along the way – and there are many of them. They don't happen in isolation; they happen by being part of a strong collaborative process, of having a strong team that works together. You never really see anything as your own in a way; it is all part of the teamwork and collaborations. It is all about providing the environment and the culture that builds the ability to create this kind of thing.

How much involvement did J.K. Rowling have in the process of recreating the vision of Diagon Alley?

Thierry: There were certain things that weren't described in the books and collaborating with J.K. Rowling allowed us to do them. During the whole thing we were showing her where we were in the process, and she gave us great feedback. It was back and forth the whole time. Her advisors had to approve everything; every word, everything you see, has been approved by her. It



Bill Weasley (Domhnall Gleeson) fights off a dragon in a scene from the Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts ride. Filming for the ride began in 2012.

makes us feel that we have created something that comes from her and from her stories, and that keeps everything true and authentic. J.K. Rowling gives us these amazing stories to work with and a depth of storytelling you can't find anywhere else, and working with her is incredible.

What were you thinking as guests entered Diagon Alley for the first time?

Thierry: Watching everyone walk through the archway and seeing their reactions was the best thing for me. Some of them just looked paralyzed! It was a dream come true for all of us. We learned from Hogsmeade that people loved the level of detail and storytelling and wanted the bar to be raised one more time, and that's what we have done. That's one of the biggest things we learned – the fans want more.

Mark: We were definitely savoring the moment. Being able to complete the journey between Hogsmeade and Diagon Alley and being able to put the two parks together in one seamless story is a great achievement. Having actors Ralph Fiennes and Helena Bonham Carter as part of this movie (Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts ride), they are such extraordinary acting talents. Seeing them in character and in costume, and on the set, and watching them bring these characters to life is really a tremendous experience. Seeing them explode into the character, it's why they are great actors and why people get so associated with this franchise.

Any final thoughts?

Thierry: Right now, Universal Orlando is the place to be. This is Harry Potter we are talking about. When we opened Hogsmeade in 2010, something completely revolutionary happened that changed the theme park experience forever, and we are reinventing the theme park experience once again with attractions that will blow your mind. We were faced with the tremendous challenge once again of telling this story with a very high bar. The only way we could pull it off was to bring the "dream team" back again, including Stuart Craig and Alan Gilmore, along with the entire team from Warner Brothers. We were duty



'Exceeding expectations' was the creative mantra of Mark Woodbury and Thierry Coup throughout the Diagon Alley construction process, and there can be little doubt they have achieved everything they set out to do with things like the Gringotts Bank dragon, top, and the all-new Carkitt Market area, above.

bound to create another extraordinary experience. This is the only place in the world where the Harry Potter experience comes to life between two theme parks. We

knew our guests and Harry Potter fans have huge expectations – as we do – and we wanted to guarantee we could exceed their expectations.

Things to Do in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter - Diagon Alley

By "SKIPPER" BEN REBSTOCK

Ok, I'll admit it. In all of my years of writing for "Orlando Attractions Magazine", I've never had a harder time writing a Top 10 column as I have in this issue. Why, you may ask? Well, it's not because I can't come up with 10 things to talk about. It's because I'm limited to only 10! That's right, there's so many amazing things to see and do in the new Diagon Alley in Universal Studios Florida that it's nearly impossible to limit it. But, after being denied making this a "Top 100" by my editor, I present to you my attempt at defining the Top 10 things you have to see and do in Diagon Alley.

10.....

Pick a Pet at Magical Menagerie

Ever wanted your own Hedwig the owl or Crookshanks the cat? At the Magical Menagerie, you'll find a wide selection of exotic pets you can take home, albeit in stuffed animal form. From Cornish pixies to hippogriffs, nearly every animal from the Harry Potter universe is represented here in some form or fashion. Besides spending money, take in the exhibits in the windows of the shop, where you'll find some very lifelike creatures, including a large python that may or may not be talking to you. How good is your parseltongue?



9

Get Fitted for a Robe at Madam Malkins

Whether you are a Gryffindor, Ravenclaw, Hufflepuff or Slytherin, Madam Malkin's Robes for All Occassions has all the gear you'll need before heading off to Hogwarts. Here, you'll find school uniforms, scarves, ties and wizard hats. But, most of all, you can be fitted for your school robe, all sporting the colors and crests of your favorite house. It's just too bad you can't buy an invisibility cloak here, it would come in very handy for jumping the Butterbeer lines!

Have a Chat at the Knight Bus

There aren't a lot of things outside Diagon Alley that let guests know what's going on behind that recreation of London. But, if you stop at the large, triple-decker purple bus, you know you are just steps away from an amazing theme park experience. But before you walk through the magical brick wall, be sure to stop by the Knight Bus and have a nice conversation with the bus conductor and the shrunken head near the driver's window. No, you read that last sentence correctly, the shrunken head really talks to you. Be sure to tell him that Skipper Ben sent you.

8



7

Grab a Bite (and Butterbeer) at The Leaky Cauldron

You can't go into a new Wizarding World area and not visit the place that introduced Diagon Alley to us in the books and movies, right? So, before you venture too far into the new section, and especially before you hop in a two-hour line at Gringotts Wizarding Bank, fill up on a traditional English meal at the Leaky Cauldron. Universal took everything you enjoyed about Three Broomsticks restaurant in Hogsmeade and upped the ante. On our visit, we enjoyed a plate of bangers and mash as well as a serving of fish and chips. It's also the first of many spots in Diagon where you can enjoy a nice cold or frozen Butterbeer. The seating is family style, so pull up nice and close to your neighbors — hopefully they're as big a Harry Potter fan as you are — and you can enjoy a nice conversation about our favorite boy wizard.

6

Dare to Enter Knockturn Alley

That dark passageway to the left of Diagon Alley, yeah, you probably shouldn't pay attention to it if you are faint of heart. But, if you are brave enough (or a member of the house of Slytherin, like myself), be sure to explore the dark side of the Wizarding World in Knockturn Alley. Just be sure you are up-to-speed with your studies from the Defense Against the Dark Arts classes before entering. The main attraction in this area is the awesomely themed Borgin and Burkes store. Here, you'll find everything you need to hang out with the "He Who Must Not Be Named" and his henchmen. Just be sure to take off your Death Eater mask before walking over to Springfield.





5

Three Words: Butterbeer Ice Cream

First, there was the drink, frozen or cold. Then, there was the temporary warm version. But now, it might be time for the best version yet, as Butterbeer ice cream can now be purchased at

Floean Fortescue's Ice-Cream Parlour. The line to get this delicious dessert might extend all the way back to Knockturn Alley, but you'll understand why once you get your hands on this signature treat. And if your appetite allows, be sure to try some of the other obscure, but yummy flavors you'll find in Fortescue's, such as Earl Grey and Lavender, Chocolate Chili and, my second favorite behind Butterbeer, Clotted Cream.

4

Cast Your Own Spells

Sure, Universal has been selling wands for years now, and who hasn't held one in their hand and pretended to cast a spell, only for nothing to happen? Well, that has all changed with the new interactive wands. Purchase your wand (for a pretty reasonable price, at least in theme park terms) and visit any number of spots around either Wizarding World. Stand over a symbol on the ground, wave your wand in the pattern it shows and say the magic words — then watch as your spell creates memorable moments right in front of your eyes. This is the best interactive experience you will find in any theme park.



3

Travel on the Hogwart's Express

Leave it to Universal Creative to take what could have been a simple train ride between two theme parks and create what is now one of the must-ride attractions in Orlando. The interior details of the cabins rival the beautiful exterior of this iconic train. The experience during your journey is completely immersive, so much so that your neck might get worn out looking back and forth at everything going on around you. Add to that fact, that there are two variations of this ride, depending on where you travel to, and you have an attraction that every Harry Potter fan around the world can enjoy.



2

Visit at Night

Diagon Alley looks terrific during the day, but it looks incredible at night. Every inch feels different when you experience it after the sun goes down. I could have listed "watch the dragon breathe fire" earlier on this list, but I didn't mention him until now because the experience is so much more intense, so much more frightening — and so much more believable — when that beast is glaring at you face-to-face in the dark. It's as if this land has two completely different identities between the day and evening. For those who say you can spend an entire day just inside Diagon Alley by itself, this is the very reason why. So, if you go to Diagon Alley first thing in the morning to try to beat the crowds, be sure to pencil in some time after nightfall to go back, you won't be sorry.



Escape from Gringotts Bank

1

Take everything you know about theme park attractions and throw it all out the window. Harry Potter and the Escape From Gringotts hasn't just changed the game, it reinvented it. For once, I'm speechless as just how to describe this ride. It's a little bit like Spider-Man, a little bit Revenge of the Mummy, a little bit Harry Potter and a little bit Soarin'.

But no matter how you break it down, it all equals one of the most amazing theme park rides you will ever experience. And, whatever you do, be sure to go through the entire queue the first time you ride, no matter what the wait time. The line is an attraction all to itself. Kudos to Universal Creative, you've delivered an instant classic theme park attraction.

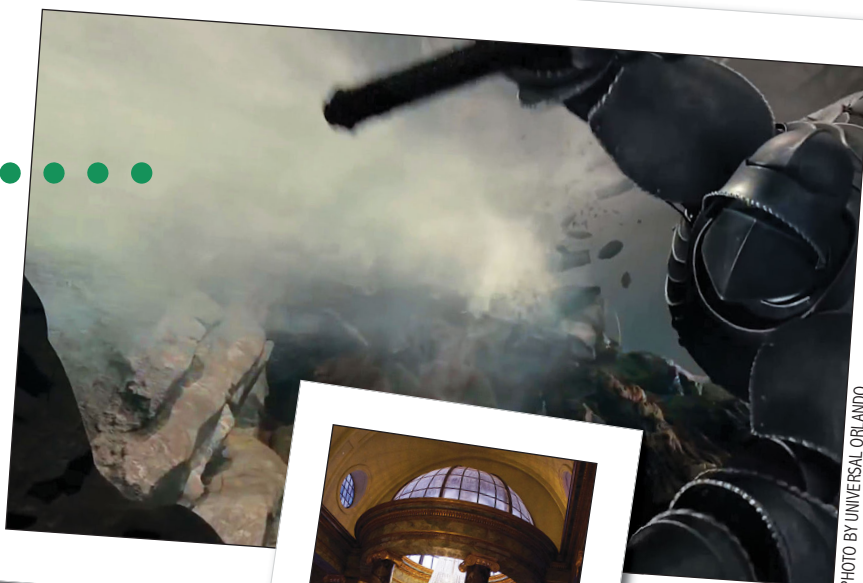


PHOTO BY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO



Skipper Ben is a former Walt Disney World cast member.

He worked at Jungle Cruise, Muppet*Vision 3D and as a producer for Radio Disney. He now resides in Dallas, Texas, with his wife Lisa (also a former cast member) and daughters Abigail Lily and Alayna Iris.

Do you agree with Ben or have a suggestion for a future Top 10?

Let us know at info@attractionsmagazine.com

Who says lightning doesn't strike twice?

The Wizarding World of Harry Potter: Diagon Alley

A Detailed Look Inside

By Seth Kubersky



PHOTO BY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO

Grinning guests get their first look at Diagon Alley during the area's grand opening on July 8, 2014.

Once you go "down deep" inside Gringotts bank, you'll board one of these carts for your epic journey on the Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts ride.



PHOTO BY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO



During daytime or after dusk, the Gringotts' dragon's flaming breath brings traffic along Diagon Alley to a dead halt and guest gawk upwards at the inferno.



Master sculptor Bryn Court, who worked on the Harry Potter and Dark Knight film series, crafted the stunning detail on the Gringotts' dragon's damaged skin.

Just over four years ago, The Wizarding World of Harry Potter debuted at Universal's Islands of Adventure, and instantly electrified Orlando – and the theme park industry as a whole – in a way that some said could never be repeated. However, Florida has been called the lightning capital of the world for good reason, and this summer's atmosphere was more energized than ever. Just as Universal Orlando's recent advertising campaign claimed, a brand new bolt (not unlike the one emblazoned on a certain boy wizard's forehead) has landed next door, making an even bigger impact than the original. The latest addition to Universal Studios Florida is much more than a well-executed extension of a favorite franchise; it's a new leap forward in the evolution of

immersive interactive entertainment. The promise of leaving your Muggle life behind and truly stepping into J.K. Rowling's universe was only hinted at in the original land, but it has finally been fully fulfilled in Diagon Alley.

Chapter One

To begin our tale, twist your Time-Turner back to June 18, 2010, when thousands of eager guests from around the world flocked to The Wizarding World of Harry Potter's debut, flooding Islands of Adventure and forming a line that stretched all the way around CityWalk. Though the seven-book series was finished, and the final films nearing release, the record-setting response to Universal's attractions proved that Potter fandom still had plenty of strength, while simul-



The entrance to Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts ride is mobbed all day with Muggles hoping to "open an account".

taneously revitalizing interest in Islands of Adventure, which had slowly slid into stagnancy since its 1999 opening.

By the time Universal sold their millionth cup of Butterbeer – mere months after the area opened – it was apparent another phase of Potter fun was in the

planning. But which location from the Wizarding World should they recreate next, and where should they put it? Locations like the Shrieking Shack, Forbidden Forest and Ministry of Magic had been suggested (and may possibly appear in future phases) but Diagon

Alley and its Gringotts goblin bank – featured in the series' first and final installments – were always the front runners. (See the Q&A on page 24.)

As for where, the obvious choice would have been to plop it alongside the existing Wizarding World, replacing the remaining sections of The Lost Continent. But Universal Creative's team – led by President Mark Woodbury, Senior Vice President Thierry Coup, Vice President Dale Mason and Art Director Alan Gilmore – took a more ambitious path, and in the process created an industry first: a fully themed environment spanning two separate parks, integrated by an immersive transportation experience. Dale said, "It's really cool that we can connect our two parks together with this experience. I think its unlike anything else in the world."

As a result, Universal Studios Florida's iconic Jaws boat ride was retired in early 2012, and its Amity village was replaced by a facade of London landmarks, behind which now lurk the tilted storefronts of the Potter universe's famous shopping mall, where an animatronic shark once swam. (Mourning Jaws fans will find several tributes to Bruce throughout Diagon Alley. See sidebar.)



A friendly Knight Bus conductor poses with a guest next to his purple triple-decker just outside of Diagon Alley. His bodyless friend talks to guests too as he hangs around inside the bus.

Five Secrets of Diagon Alley

Want to impress your friends and family when visiting the Diagon Alley? With knowledge of these insider secrets and hidden "Easter eggs," they'll think you're a real wizard!

1. Knockturn Alley's darkened corners conceal many tricks and treats; beware of the tattoo shop's animated samples, the window of singing shrunken heads and the vanishing cabinet and moving hand inside Borgin & Burkes.

2. Speaking of Knockturn, look at the map included with interactive wands under the blacklight found inside the Alley to see glowing secret symbols. Examine the unmarked book outside Scribbulous, and Slug and Jiggers Apothecary window more hidden spell locations.

3. Florean Fortescue's ice cream parlor usually has the longest line besides Gringotts, but if all you want is the super-popular Butterbeer ice cream, you can order it with much less wait at the Fountain of Fair Fortune. Get a cup of cold Butterbeer on the side and make your own Butterbeer float!

4. Fans of the former Jaws attraction will be interested to learn that Gringotts' lobby sits approximately where Quint's boathouse once was. Look for the following tributes to the late great shark: a telescope made of boat parts in Wiseacres; a jawbone in the Apothecary window; and musical tributes in Knockturn and London's record shop (along with other in-jokes from the design team).

5. London is also home to other easily overlooked delights. Pose with the Knight Bus conductor, and chat with his Caribbean-accented shriveled sidekick. Spot Kreacher peeking out of the window above 12 Grimmauld Place. Find the hidden (non-usable) entrance to The Leaky Cauldron, with a vanishing sign. And dial 62442 (MAGIC) in the phone booth for a message from the Ministry of Magic.



Miraflora Mina and Eduardo Lima of MinaLima, who designed distinctive typography for the Potter films, created evocative shop signage throughout Diagon Alley.

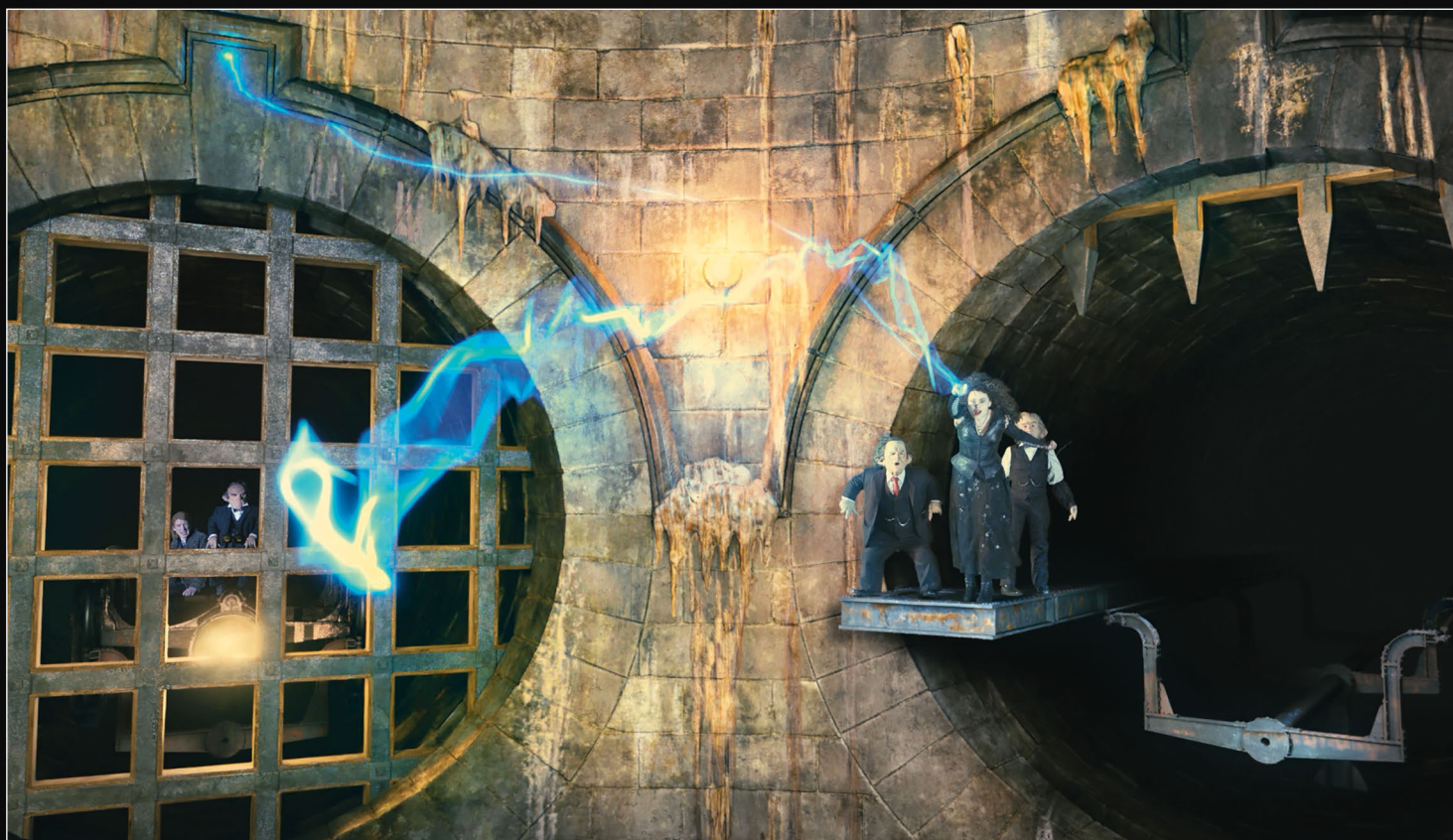


PHOTO BY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO

This is the first scene riders encounter on Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts. Bellatrix Lestrange hits your cart with a spell and sends you down further into the bank vault.

Your tour of Diagon Alley begins in the London Waterfront, a park-like plaza of English icons including Wyndham's Theatre, Leicester Square and Piccadilly Circus' Shaftesbury fountain. This is the unmagical Muggle world, so there are no obvious signs – aside from the purple triple-decker Knight Bus and some hidden treats (see sidebar) – of the wonders hidden on the other side of the facade. Find the concealed archway in the central brick wall (which doesn't actually move because of safety concerns) and you enter Diagon Alley's cobblestone thoroughfare.

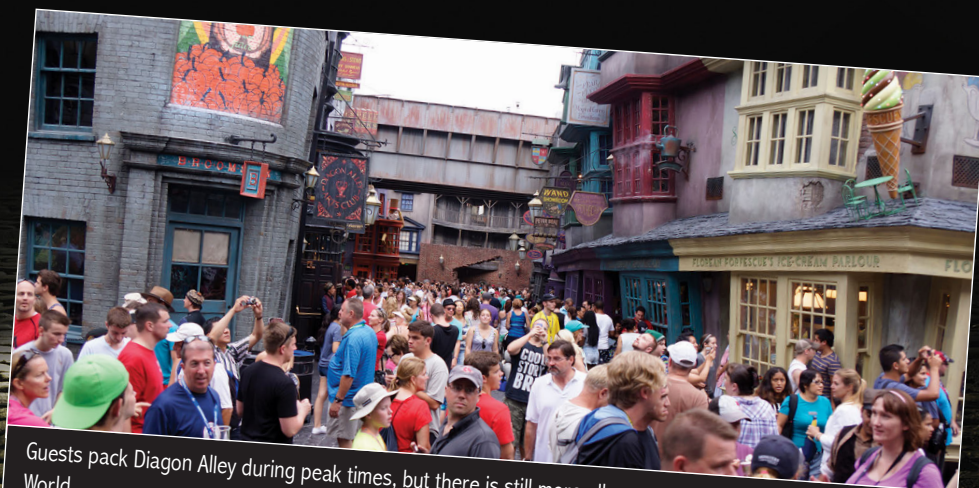
It's in the Details

From top to bottom, Diagon Alley "has been very authentically designed to represent a palate of British architecture and history," according to Alan, who

again, collaborated with Oscar-winning production designer Stuart Craig in bringing the films they worked on to life. "You have the Victorian streets and market, which is very typical of London ... It's very much a layered architecture, where buildings are retained if possible, so we all live in much older structures.

There's a real romance to that ... It's almost an enhanced reality where the buildings lean a little bit more, and the colors are a little bit stronger, to give it that sense of magic."

At the top of the high street before you, framed by sloping five-story storefronts, sits the crooked columns of Gringotts bank, with a stunning scarred



Guests pack Diagon Alley during peak times, but there is still more elbow room than in the original Wizarding World.

Stores are Big Part of the Attraction in Diagon Alley

By Barb Nefer

Muggles in the Harry Potter books and movies have no idea that Diagon Alley is right in the heart of London, just through the Leaky Cauldron on Charing Cross Road. You might be just as unaware when walking past London at Universal Studios Florida and browsing at the kiosk of classic U.K. themed souvenirs, like Union Jacks, “Keep Calm and Carry On” mugs, Teddy Bear bobbies and even plush double decker buses. If you ask the team members working the kiosk, they’re likely to disavow any knowledge of such a secret place.

Luckily, in Universal’s version of Diagon Alley, Muggles can pass right through the subtle entrance in London and immediately be immersed in this magical hub of commerce.

What would wizards and witches think about Muggles invading Diagon Alley? Speaking for the Weasley twins, actor James Phelps said, “Our characters would think ‘ch-ching!’”

Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes

Indeed, the shop run by the Weasley twins is one of the most notable, and Oliver Phelps says it lives up to its movie counterpart. “The shop itself was my favorite set to film on because of the detail and the size of it,” he said. “Here it’s more of a finished product because there’s a roof on it and the details that were put into it are fantastic.

“You’ve got that huge figure of Fred, and he’s lifting his hat, and then he puts it down, and then there’s a bunny rabbit under there. Just stuff like

that. I mean, they could have easily just made a static one, but they got that detail to make it work like that, and the inside is just like the film as well.”

The shop is packed with all the jokes and novelties you’d expect, as well as silly snacks and Pygmy Puffs for adoption. Some of the popular items include Extendable Ears, Sneakoscopes and Bing Bong Ginger Snaps. Edibles include Skiving Snackboxes, Puking Pastilles and Fainting Fancies candies.

Wands by Gregorovitch and Ollivanders

One of the Diagon Alley shops got its start in Hogsmeade in the original Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Islands of Adventure. “The wand shop, Ollivanders, that’s back now in its home, just like in the fiction in Diagon Alley,” said Mike Aiello, creative development director.

Like its predecessor, which remains open, the new/original Ollivanders is as much of a show as it is a store. Patrons enter in small groups, and one lucky wizard or witch gets chosen by a wand after a bit of magical trial and error. The line gets long, but there’s no better way to feel like you’re following in Harry Potter’s footsteps than to go through the wand experience.

For those who don’t want to go through the wait in line and take the risk of not being chosen, Wands by Gregorovitch in Carkitt Market is a good alternative. It sells Harry Potter film wands and a variety of regular and interactive styles.

Shutterbutton's Photography Studio

This is the place to get a “moving pictures” scrapbook DVD that features you in different spots all around the Wizarding Worlds through green screen magic. It’s a lot more fun than the typical static photographic scrapbook.

Quality Quidditch Supplies

The Muggle world has shops for every sport from baseball to basketball to NASCAR racing, and Quality Quidditch Supplies is the Diagon Alley equivalent. It’s packed with team souvenirs and apparel like pennants, hats, and shirts,



Watch for a bit of magic under the hat on the giant figure outside of Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes.

and you can also stock up on Quidditch supplies like brooms and Quaffle balls if you’re a player yourself.

Madam Malkin's Robes for All Occasions

School uniforms in the Muggle world are drab and boring, but Madam Malkin's Robes for All Occasions is the place to get those beloved Hogwarts robes, scarves, ties and other paraphernalia. Whether your house is Gryffindor, Slytherin, Ravenclaw or Hufflepuff, you’ll find your fashions here.

Magical Menagerie

You might not be able to take Hagrid’s Care of Magical Creatures class, but you can pick up your own mystical beasts at the Magical Menagerie. Owls, cats, unicorns, toads, ravens and even Hippogriffs are all ready to come home with you. You can also get other merchandise, like T-shirts featuring your favorite creatures from the Wizarding World.

Wiseacre's Wizarding Equipment

As its name implies, Wiseacre’s Wizarding Equipment has everything a witch or wizard could possibly need. You’ll find it at the exit of the Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts ride, with a full selection of crystal balls, hourglasses, compasses



You can have a real chat with this goblin while you cash in your Muggle money inside Gringotts Money Exchange.



Wiseacre's Wizarding Equipment mixes magical supplies with a stellar stock of souvenirs.

and telescopes. It also has a wide variety of souvenirs like cauldron mugs, phone cases, T-shirts, pillows, pins and even Hogwarts Express train models. It's a fun and eclectic assortment. There's an Easter egg on display in this shop in the form of the microscope used by Bill Weasley in the ride pre-show.

Scribbulus

Located next to Gringotts, and connected to Wiseacre's, Scribbulus is the spot for fancy writing accessories like parchment paper and feather quill pens. You can pick up postcards, stationery, and journals in which to memorialize your Diagon Alley memories the old-fashioned way.

Borgin and Burkes

If you dare to brave Knockturn Alley, you'll be rewarded with the opportunity to purchase your very own Dark Arts-related objects in the sinister confines of Borgin and Burkes. You'll find Death Eater masks and robes, Dementor shirts, skulls, jewelry like Voldemort Horcrux necklaces, and even walking sticks that conceal a wand. Beware while shopping, as you'll hear a Boggart trying to escape from its locked chest, as well as the sad sound of the bird in the Vanishing Cabinet. You can even get



Top: Honor your favorite team with merchandise from Quality Quidditch Supplies.

Above: Swallow your fear and indulge your dark side at Borgin and Burkes.

a T-shirt with a wanted poster for Sirius Black and Bellatrix Lestrange.

Gringotts Money Exchange

Even though Diagon Alley is centered around shopping, entertainment is closely interwoven into the experience. For example, "We've got the Gringotts Money Exchange," said Mike, "which is a wonderful interactive experience where guests can exchange Muggle currency for Wizarding Bank Notes in \$10 and \$20 increments. While you're in there, you're able to interact with one of the goblins, and he can hear you. He can respond to you. It's a really cool experience. Very intimate."

Coupled with other elements like the interactive wands, entertaining shop windows, store displays and Ollivanders wand shop, Diagon Alley is as much an entertainment destination as it is a shopping district. "We could not be happier with the breadth of the entertainment concept we've been able to offer," Mike said. "We've very pleased with everything, and it was a real gift to create this world."

dragon perched atop its crowning dome. This scaly sculptural marvel doesn't move, but when he growls and breathes actual fire every 10 minutes or so, you'll swiftly forgive his static status. While Gringotts' attention-grabbing dragon serves as Diagon Alley's wow-moment – Mark called it "the easiest 'yes' ever to approve" – it is the streets on either side of it that give the new area its depth. Unlike Hogsmeade, which essentially has a single pathway from entry to exit, Diagon was designed as a figure-eight with criss-crossing alleys creating alternative pedestrian pathways. At the top of the main corridor you'll find Horizont Alley (a newly named avenue approved by J.K. Rowling), while the glass canopy-covered Carkitt Market sits parallel to it on the right. Concealed behind the storefronts to the left is Knockturn Alley, an evildoers paradise of perpetual evening.

In combination, the intersecting alleys create the illusion of an environment you could get lost in, not unlike Disneyland's New Orleans Square or Epcot's Morocco pavilion. "People enjoy the discovery and exploration part of this experience as much as they enjoy a particular ride," said Mark. "A movie set is only so big," Dale said, "and we get to actually take you around the corner to see what's there, to discover something else," which (according to Thierry) "allowed us to bring in some of the bits that were in the books that we never saw in the films, a lot of detail that we had to read the stories to know about."

From Screen to Theme

One important element that aided the original Wizarding World's sense of authenticity was the participation of actors from the original films, especially the central triumvirate of Daniel Radcliffe (Harry Potter), Emma Watson (Hermione Granger) and Rupert Grint (Ron Weasley). Radcliffe

Five Diagon Alley Touring Tips

You may have already experienced the original Wizarding World, but everything about Diagon Alley is exponentially bigger: the ambitions, the architecture and especially the attendance. Luckily, you have these expert tips from our author, a Universal wait time researcher at Touring Plans.

1. Universal Orlando's four onsite hotels (and certain off-site vacation packages) include early admission to Diagon Alley an hour before the general public. If eligible, arrive at Universal Studios Florida's front gate on the morning's first boat or bus from your resort, and be among the first guests into Gringotts for a minimal wait.

2. If you can't enter early, don't bother going to Gringotts first; the line will be longest in the first hours after the official opening. Instead, enjoy other attractions before their lines get long, and visit Diagon Alley in the late afternoon.

3. Gringotts has a single rider line that is usually about 35 percent of the posted standby wait. In addition to being separated from your party, you will miss all of the queue between the lobby and loading area, including the preshow and elevator, so it isn't recommended for your first ride.

4. The standby wait for Gringotts drops steadily throughout the afternoon, settling around a 90 minute actual wait on busy days. Be careful, because the queue can be closed off to new entrants as early as two or three hours before park closing.

5. Hogwarts Express usually has little wait in the morning and evening, but queues can approach an hour in the afternoon. If you want to ride but don't have park-to-park admission, upgrade at either train station. If the wait is under 30 minutes, it's quicker to ride than walk. King's Cross exits outside Diagon Alley, so you cannot get into Gringotts ahead of guests entering Universal Studios' front gate by riding in from Hogsmeade.

Interactive Wands and Windows

According to Universal Creative Art Director Alan Gilmore, "coming from the film team, where we only built Diagon Alley maybe 20 feet high, we've had a chance [at Universal] to build it for real. It's a real living, breathing city." Helena Bonham Carter also compared the area favorable to the original sets, saying "we didn't even have ceilings, and sometimes we didn't have anything, just green screens, and that's it."

The Wizarding World seems so authentic that some guests would love to live there; costumed guests decked out in full Hogwarts regalia have been a regular fixture on even the hottest days since Hogsmeade opened. With Diagon's debut, Universal introduced a way for fans to take "cosplay" to an entirely new level, with new interactive wands that allow wielders to cast "spells" in dozens of animated windows around both Wizarding Worlds.

Your interactive wand experience ideally begins at Ollivanders Wand Shop in Diagon Alley. Though it presents the same "wand chooses the wizard" special effects ceremony as the original annex in Hogsmeade, this new flagship venue hides three separate showrooms for triple the guest capacity, plus a few extra surprises (look for the self-sweeping broom near the entry). The shopping area you exit into is also far larger here, with glass cases displaying the 13 "Ollivanders Original" wand styles inspired by the Celtic calendar. These interactive wands (\$44.95) were redesigned with more details than the old non-interactive models. Interactive versions replicating wands wielded by Harry, Hermione, and Dumbledore are also available for the same price, as are non-interactive replicas of many other famous wizards' wands (\$34.95). The wand is a one-time purchase for unlimited use, and never needs a recharge or battery change.

Once you have your wand, find interactive locations using the included map; look for medallions embedded in the ground for the exact spell-casting spot. Hold your arm still over the medallion, and trace the indicated shape using small motions with your wrist and wand. The trick is to get a hidden camera (indicated by small red lights) to register the movement of the infrared reflector affixed to the wand's tip. If you are having trouble, ask one of the wand assistants wandering around to demonstrate and coach you. There are interactive effects in both parks' Potter areas, and even a few hidden ones (see secrets sidebar), so you're not a real wizard until you activate them all!



and Watson declined to reprise their roles for Diagon Alley, and were replaced by dubbed digital doppelgangers (some poorly). Rupert did return, along with Robbie Coltraine (Hagrid), and was joined by his cinematic siblings James and Oliver Phelps (Fred and George Weasley). Better yet, the big baddies were brought on board, with Ralph Fiennes (Voldemort) and Helena Bonham Carter (Bellatrix LeStrange) recreating their sinister screen characters in new high-definition 3D ride footage. "Having Helena Bonham Carter and Ralph Fiennes as part of this 'movie' was really extraordinary," raved Mark. "They are extraordinary acting talents, and having them on the set with Thierry directing them, seeing them





Carkitt Market, which lies parallel to Diagon Alley, contains wonders like an enchanted water fountain and magical elixirs, all under a protective glass canopy. This is also where you'll see the stage shows.

in character and in costume ... watching them bring these characters to life is really a tremendous experience."

Coltrane, the Phelps, and Bonham Carter were only a few of the celebrities in attendance during June's media preview week, which culminated in a star-studded ceremony shown on E! Entertainment Television. Speaking to the press on the morning after the party,



A side profile of the Death puppet in *The Tale of the Three Brothers* show, a part of *The Tales of Beetle the Bard*.

Helena said she relished the opportunity to return to Bellatrix and be reunited with a favorite element of the character's wardrobe: "My teeth. I really wanted my teeth. I miss my teeth actually." Dental appliances aside, she enjoyed portraying a "really anarchic, and really naughty" character that she's thought deeply about. "I thought I had to be scary but at the same time I wanted to make them laugh, too ... She's troubled, [or] she's just very sick, but then I find playing sick people more interesting. You think, how on Earth did you get to this point where you find it enjoyable to torture someone?" Helena and her partner Tim Burton brought their children, who were as "enchanted" by Diagon Alley as their parents. "What's so great about this place is that it makes me a child too," she praised. "It really has a preternatural sense of wonder – real wonder – and it's transporting."

One Upmanship

While the first Wizarding World was a critical and commercial hit, there were areas to improve upon. Some say the shops and pathways in Hogsmeade are uncomfortably (if authentic) small, with especially long lines for Ollivanders wand shop. The signature Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey attraction proved too thrilling for many younger (and older) guests. And because it was retrofitted around preexisting attractions, Hogsmeade has steel roller-coaster tracks and neighboring islands intruding on the magic.

All of these issues were ably addressed and then some in Diagon Alley, with expansive pedestrian areas, organized store queues and a triple-sized wand shop. "When we laid out Hogsmeade, we never realized the crowds," Dale explained. "We needed to be true to the story, which was to keep things tight and close, but we also



It's always nighttime inside Knockturn Alley, spooky site of many creepy corners.

needed to have space, and I think we've achieved pretty well the feeling of a tight and closed-in urban environment, yet still have a space for our guests." The new Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts ride is accessible to kids as short as 42 inches tall, and is more sensorially stimulating than physically taxing for those frightened of extreme thrills. And most importantly, once inside Diagon Alley, the "real world" completely disappears. It's almost disappointing to have to exit into the rest of Universal Studios Florida, as the rest of its word-class attractions appear ordinary afterwards in comparison.

When Diagon Alley finally opened to the public on July 8, the mob scene at the 2010 premiere was replaced by carefully controlled queues concealed behind the Men In Black ride. Even with expert crowd management, some opening day guests waited more than three hours just to enter Diagon Alley, and another seven to ride the Gringotts attraction. Months after its debut, demand for Diagon Alley has died down somewhat, but it still draws a sizable crowd daily from rope drop, with the bank ride queue frequently exceeding three hours.

#PotterWatch

As long as those waits may sound, they're nothing compared to the 30 days enthusiastically endured by the dedicated fans on PotterWatch. Daniel Germain and Megan Stump, both Orlando area schoolteachers, were among those stationed outside Diagon Alley every day between June 9, when construction walls around the London facade were removed, and the July 8 grand opening, tweeting with the hashtag #PotterWatch to update followers worldwide on the project's progress. "It basically just hap-



Stars of the Harry Potter film series reunited alongside Universal and Warner Brothers executives at Diagon Alley's red carpet debut in June.

pened out of nowhere," explained Megan. "I went out there to finally see London that first day, and between friends wanting to go, or boredom, I was going every day the first week." Daniel added, "I was never intending to spend 30 days sitting in Universal, but after meeting and hanging out with so many awesome people, I couldn't think of any better way to spend the first part of my summer vacation."

It wasn't your typical vacation, especially considering the heat, which Megan admits was "absolutely miserable" on some days, and some negative comments made by other guests "just because it was something that they themselves wouldn't do," according to Daniel. But both agree that "the best part of Potterwatch was definitely getting to meet so many great Harry Potter fans and friends," with the opportunity to meet film stars like Evanna Lynch (Luna Lovegood), Tom Felton (Draco Malfoy), Warwick Davis (Griphook), and Matthew Lewis (Neville Longbottom) – who made a point of greeting PotterWatchers during the red carpet media party – as "an added bonus to the whole affair."

Star encounters aside, the eventual entry into Diagon Alley lived up to their elevated expectations, just as it did for the thousands of screaming, weeping guests who entered on opening day under a cloud of confetti. "I was an emotional wreck," recalled Megan. "When they let us know they were letting us in after 25 days of standing and sitting around barricades, we were so excited and everything just hit me all at once." Daniel said he "was speechless and stunned when I first got into Diagon: It felt so real that I felt like I left the theme park behind. I remember running from store to store with my friends just trying to take it all in."

Beloved by All

You don't have to be a Potter super-fan or serious scholar to appreciate the depth of texture that has been lovingly applied to every crack and crevice of Diagon Alley, but it certainly doesn't hurt. Heidi Tandy, a Florida attorney and fandom legal blogger



This charming stone station serves as the departure depot for the Hogwarts Express train from Hogsmeade to London.

(fyeahcopyright.tumblr.com) who served on the Harry Potter Educational Foundation's events team, attended the original Wizarding World's opening, and has nothing but praise for the Diagon designers' attention to detail. "It's so true to what we've seen on screen and in our imaginations. It's fantastic to be able to walk through the brick wall into Diagon Alley and spend a day or more where you really do get to feel like a character from the books," Heidi enthused. "You're a witch or a wizard, shopping and dining on the magical high street with your family, checking out the books piled up at Flourish & Blotts and a Celestina Warbeck concert, considering a moving tattoo in Knockturn Alley, being reminded by a sign that you might need some of Drooble's Best Blowing Gum ... It's a magical immersion, perfect for fans of the Potter books, the films, and places with a lot of wizardly whimsy."

Every day, new guests get an eyeful of Diagon Alley, and their paralyzed reactions are all the motivation Universal's creative team say they need. "The fans really love all the details we put in Hogsmeade and Hogwarts," Universal Creative's Thierry Coup concluded. "We wanted to take that and raise the bar one more time, and that's what we've done here. You come down Diagon Alley and you can tell it's a whole different level, a whole different scale ... It's a great reward to watch these reactions and emotions, it's what fuels us up and makes us want to do more."

Live Entertainment

Hyper-detailed environments, and the animated creatures who inhabit them, may set the stage, but it's the live performers who really bring the Wizarding World to life. Hogsmeade has been home to two cult-favorite shows: the Frog Choir and Triwizard Spirit Rally; but Diagon Alley expands the role of actors within its Potter experiences, both in the flesh and behind the scenes.

Universal Orlando Creative Director Mike Aiello (collaborating with writer/directors Patrick Brailard, Anitra Pritchard and Jason Horne) oversaw all aspects of the new area's entertainment offerings, from the Knight Bus conductor and his spirited shrunken head (voiced by an unseen actor), to the animatronic goblin in the the currency exchange, which responds to customer's queries using hundreds of scripted responses. "Everyone is conditioned to be very passive with an animatronic figure; you stand there and you watch it do its thing," said Mike. "The look on people's faces when they realize 'I'm actually engaging with this and it's understanding what I'm saying,' has been just a really cool thing to watch."

In the center of Carkitt Market, you'll find a flight of stairs that forms a convenient elevated playing area for Diagon Alley's scheduled stage performances. Every half hour, the platform lights up (literally, after sunset) with lively performances that appeal to Potterphiles and neophytes alike. Your visit to Diagon Alley isn't really complete without attending them all. Luckily, there's never a wait for these attractions; just grab a snack and find a spot to stand a few minutes before showtime:

Celestina Warbeck and the Banshees were only mentioned briefly in the books, but now Molly Weasley's favorite singing sorceress supplies inspiration for a standout musical show. The Billie Holiday-style diva delivers jazzy tunes with titles by J.K. Rowling, and lyrics based on her Pottermore writing. The show's swinging songs were created by Alan Zachary and Michael Weiner, "two amazing composers," who wrote Broadway's "First Date" and Disney Cruise Line's "Twice Charmed". Mike worked with the team on "finding that middle ground in the songs where they don't sound kitschy, or like we're paying lip-service to the fiction. But it does live in a world where these are songs that could actually be heard, that witches and wizards would openly listen to and be a fan of." Though the genre may not strike some as properly Potter-esque, the musical charms of Celestina and her dancing backup singers should soothe the most savage beast or Boggart. "One thing I love about the show is that once those girls hit the stage they are electric," added Mike. "You are just locked in the entire time. They're really fantastic!"

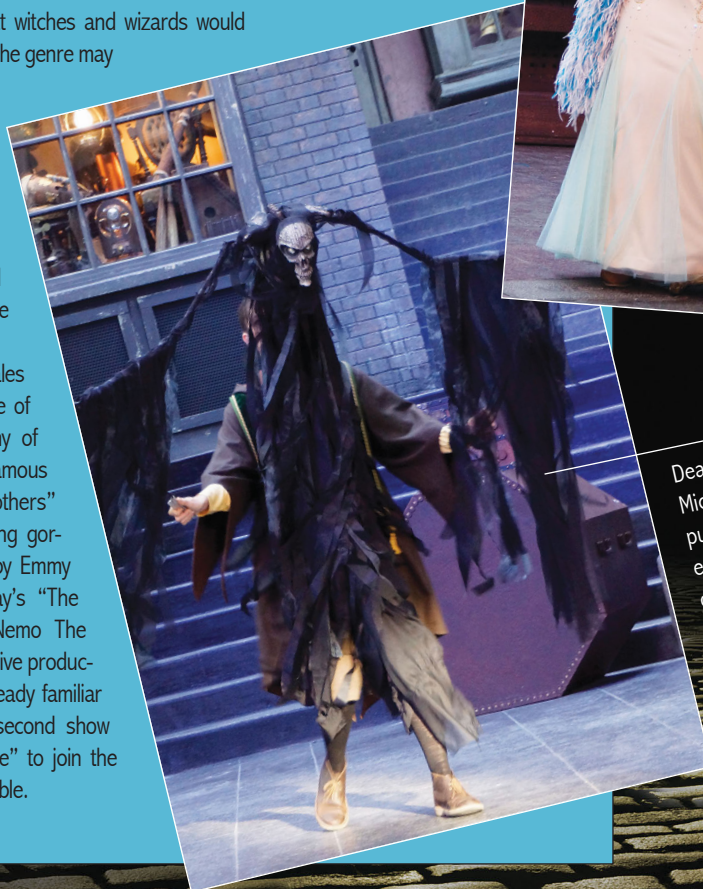
Alternating with Warbeck are the Tales of Beetle the Bard, as told by a troupe of thespians from the "Wizarding Academy of Dramatic Arts." Four actors reenact a famous wizarding folk tale — like the "Three Brothers" fable featured in *Deathly Hallows* — using gorgeous hand-crafted puppets designed by Emmy Award winner Michael Curry (Broadway's "The Lion King", Disney World's "Finding Nemo The Musical"). This short but visually imaginative production is enchanting even if you aren't already familiar with the source material. Look for a second show based on "The Fountain of Fair Fortune" to join the repertoire by the time this issue is available.



An audience member may find themselves pulled on stage for the chorus line during Celestina Warbeck's musical revue.



The "Singing Sorceress" strikes a pose on the Carkitt Market stage.



Death, in the form of a Michael Curry-designed rod puppet, makes a dramatic entrance during "The Tales of Beetle the Bard".

Diagon Alley Offers Two Very Different Groundbreaking Rides

By Seth Kubersky

Diagon Alley's streets and shops supply such a surfeit of sensory stimulation, a seemingly ceaseless flood of unfamiliar sights, sounds, smells and tastes that one could happily spend hours inside without ever experiencing any of the attractions that most guests associate with attending a theme park. That would be an error, however, as The Wizarding World of Harry Potter - Diagon Alley introduced two of the best rides in Universal's repertoire. The Forbidden Journey attraction inside Islands of Adventure's Hogwarts Castle is renowned as one of the most immersive, innovative indoor rides ever created, and Hogsmeade's outdoor roller coasters add additional (if under-themed) thrills. For Diagon Alley, Universal Creative was challenged to raise their bar yet again, establishing new standards in storytelling and simulation while simultaneously making experiences accessible to a wider range of guests. Whether you are looking for the latest and greatest in "multidimensional" high-speed adventures, or a family-friendly voyage through your imagination, the new Wizarding World has a ride that's right up your Alley.



Animatronic goblins (with amazingly detailed skin and hair) labor in Gringotts' magnificent lobby, occasionally glancing down at waiting guests.

Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts

If you saw the mine-cart-like vehicles traversing the vaults of Gringotts Bank (as featured in the first and last Potter films) and thought, "that would make a great ride," you're in good company. "Gringotts was impor-

tant to us to bring to life, Universal Creative President Mark Woodbury said. "Gringotts, as you know from the films and books, was a ride waiting to happen, and the chance to build the ride was an opportunity we just didn't want to miss."

More than just a high-speed thrill ride, Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts is an immersive "E-Ticket" experience from entry to exit, beginning with the epic dragon-topped exterior and an elaborate interactive queue that rivals those for Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey and Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure. After possibly enduring an unglamorous exterior extended queue on

very busy days (capable of corralling up to 4,000 guests), prospective customers of the goblin-run savings and loan enter the luxurious marble lobby, where eerily lifelike animatronic goblins labor beneath massive crystal chandeliers, directing arrivals towards a souvenir "security photo" station.

As you progress through the bank's corridors, animated newspapers and silhouetted figures behind office doors divulge that you've dropped in just as Harry and friends are executing the daring heist as seen in the final Potter film. In a theme park first, the iconic action scene is recreated with a unique twist: you and your friends become secondary characters that intersect with the heroes in the midst of their death-defying quest, seeing familiar scenes from alternate angles that might have been deleted scenes from a "director's cut" of the movie. This novel approach, Mark explained, "gave us the opportunity to tell a specific story . . . It was a tricky piece of business to find a way to do it that would be authentic, [but] we figured out there was a 'slice in time' by which you would be inside Gringotts Bank at the moment Harry, Ron and Hermione are breaking in to steal the HorocruX. And we found an opportunity to place ourselves in that action . . . It took a lot of thought



Before you can board Hogwarts Express at Platform 9 3/4, you must pass through a magical brick wall, brought to life by a cleverly positioned piece of glass.

and consideration to find a way to allow us to be in that moment."

This clever backstory may be a bit complex for Potter neophytes to follow, but a pair of preshows should help make the adventure intelligible to all. First, visitors are invited into Bill Weasley's office, where a remarkable "Musion Eyeliner" hologram of Ron's curse-breaking brother (played by actor Domhnall Gleeson, getting more screen-time here than he ever did in the films) offers to accompany their vault visit. (Serious series fans should smile at the goblin Blordak's shocked response to Bill's appearance, which contradicts previously established Potter cannon.) That briefing is followed by a fantastic faux elevator ride nine miles down into the bank's deepest basement, simulated with ceiling projections and bouncing floors in a nostalgic nod to Epcot's extinct Hydrolators; for some, this plunge provides a satisfying show in of itself.

After acquiring 3D "Cart Goggles" and climbing spiral stairs to the stalactite-studded boarding station, it's time to strap into a two-car/24-passenger cart for your vault tour. Without spoiling too many surprises, rest assured that Bellatrix and Voldemort are on the scene and will try to make you suffer for your suspected support of Potter's pilfering. Marauding trolls, a snapping snake and a fire-breathing dragon all factor into your fraught four-minute escape from the fearsome foes, which climaxes in an all-encompassing dome of virtual lava.

Gringotts employs a cutting edge combination of roller coaster maneuvers, simulator-style spinning and swaying, and massive practical sets that blend seamlessly with super-sharp 3D projections. It could be described as a cross between *Revenge of the Mummy* and *Transformers The Ride 3-D*, but isn't as physically intense as either; if you can handle Disney's Big Thunder Mountain Railroad, Gringotts' surprisingly mild coaster elements shouldn't discombobulate you. What Gringotts misses in extreme motion, it makes up for with innovative storytelling and immersive special effects, making it a credible candidate for the coveted "best dark ride" crown.

Hogwarts Express

Though much of the media attention and mass adoration has gone towards Gringotts ride, the Hogwarts Express has proven the Wizarding World's sleeper hit, quietly moving an amazing one million guests between Universal Orlando's two theme parks within only a month after the grand opening. "In a process this long, it's fascinating to see the moments of brilliance that happen amongst the creative team, there are a few that jump out," Mark recalled. "The idea of linking the two parks with the train was just a ground-breaking thought." The world's first fully themed inter-park transport is apparently tempting plenty of tourists to pony up for Universal's park-to-park passes (which are required in order to ride) despite a \$40 price premium on one-day tickets.

Mickey's monorails may have been taking visitors from Magic Kingdom to Epcot for over 30 years, but they don't isolate riders from the outside world the way Harry's trains do. Commuters commence at the Universal Studios Florida end inside King's Cross station, a faithful tribute to the London landmark down to the flipping arrival signs and serenading street musicians. There's even an in-queue snack stand selling authentic British beers and bags of crisps to consume during your trip, another rarity for rides.

Before boarding in King's Cross, you must follow in Potter's footsteps by passing through the "brick wall" to Platform 9-3/4, recreated in reality with a photogenic "Pepper's Ghost" mirror gag. With a whoosh you wind up at the loading area, and the Hogwarts Express soon backs into the station, billowing steam as its signature whistle blows. Inside, travelers are seated in plush eight-passengers cabins that are exact replicas of those seen on-screen, down to the carefully sourced upholstery.

Once the train begins moving, riders are treated to a multimedia travelogue that replaces mundane views of Universal's backstage with remarkable curved projection screens just outside the "windows"; though not 3D, they impart an eye-fooling degree of depth to the virtual scenery. During the four minute trip, you'll see character cameos both outside the train, and on the other side of the cabin's frosted glass door (as especially convincing projections). There's a brief bit of spookiness, but it's designed to appeal to the entire family, so there's no height requirement or physical limitations; even wheelchair users can roll aboard.

The rustic stone station at Islands of Adventure's Hogsmeade end, nestled between Dragon Challenge's tracks and Sindbad's stadium, doesn't have any of King's Cross special effects, though there is a thestral carriage (pulled by its unseen steed) parked outside



Gringotts' gorgeous crystal chandeliers are just a sample of the astounding details decorating the ride's extensive queue.

the exit. But it does provide the best opportunity to pose with the Express' engine (a static locomotive also remains inside Hogsmeade) along with a completely different audio/visual experience on the journey back to Studios. Whichever direction you chose, the trip is certain to charm any visitor, and may make Potter devotees deeply emotional.



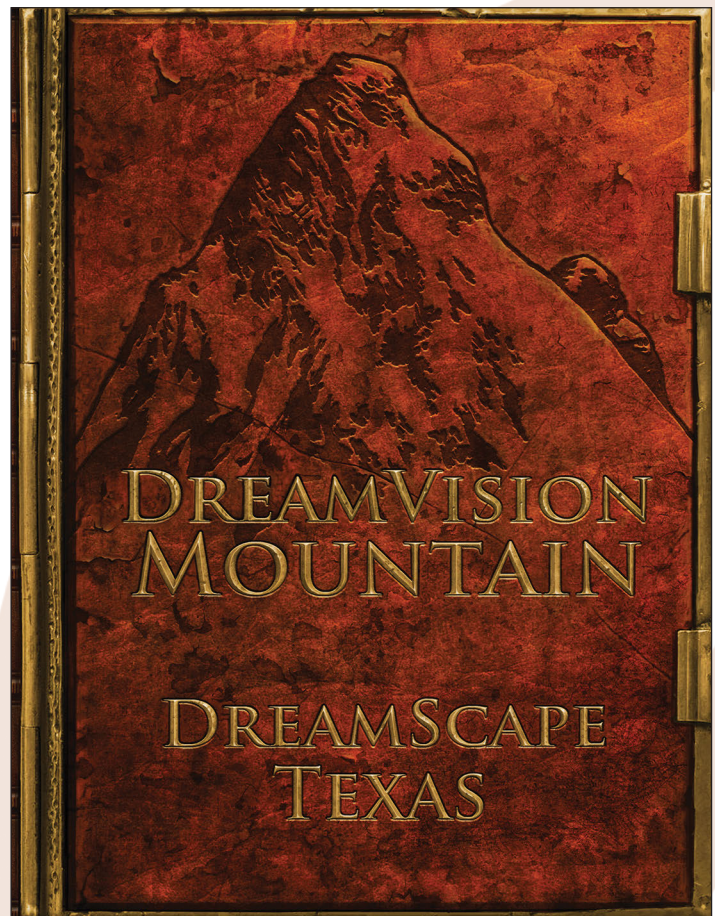
Guests line up to board the Hogwarts Express as she prepares to steam away from Platform 9 3/4 on another haul to Hogsmeade.

DREAMVISION

The Birth of A New Theme Park

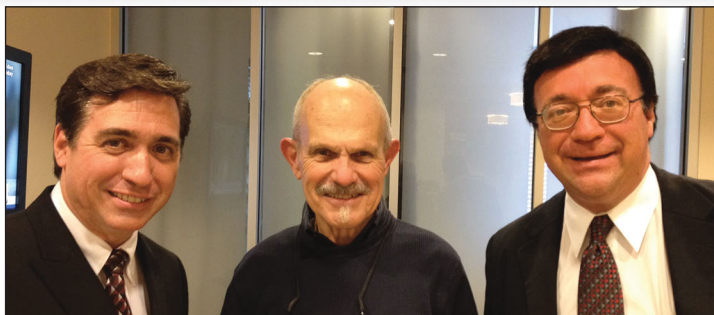
An Attractions Magazine Exclusive

By Simon & Susan Veness



The scale, scope and details of the new theme park are contained within this private master book of drawings, designs and maps.

DREAMSCAPE



DreamVision's three main driving forces are, from left, President Vince Silanskas, Chief Creative Officer Ron Logan and Chief Executive Officer Rick Silanskas.

For Rick Silanskas, it all began with a dream. For Ron Logan, it started with a vision. And together, the two veteran entertainment creative forces are preparing a venture that puts them together as The DreamVision Company, with plans for the biggest theme park the world has ever seen.

We sat in Ron's office at the Rosen College of Hospitality Management on Universal Boulevard in Orlando, where he is an associate professor, and listened to the two men tell their story. We were immediately captivated by the breadth and scope of their company and their 'vision,' if you like, for where it can take them.

But let's just back-track a moment to highlight what these two Orlando stalwarts have already achieved before we outline where they are going, as the journey also includes Russia, South Africa – and Texas, where their DreamVision park is currently being planned.

Ron Logan is already a familiar name to many Walt Disney World fans, a genuine Disney Legend who was recognized in 2007 for his contributions to all of the Disney parks in the realm of live entertainment, plus the creation of the fabulously successful *Beauty & The Beast – A New Musical* on Broadway in 1993. (See our Q&A with Ron in the Fall 2013 issue.)

His biography reads like a starry-eyed combination of the very best shows in the Disney empire, where, as executive vice president for Walt Disney Entertainment Worldwide, he enjoyed a 27-year career that produced highlights like Epcot's spectacular *IllumiNations: Reflections of Earth*, the nightly

Hollywood Studios show *Fantasmic!*, Animal Kingdom's Festival of the Lion King and *Spectromagic* at Magic Kingdom, as well as *Buffalo Bill's Wild West Dinner Show* at Disneyland Paris.

Rick Silanskas is a dyed-in-the-wool Walt Disney devotee but never actually worked for the company. Instead, he followed his own path for the past 40 years as an executive, producer and composer for TV, movies and other creative production efforts, including live sports production during the start-up of ESPN in 1978.

His resume includes the award-winning score for the movie *Hoover* in 2000, the *American Freedom Suite* composition, which was presented to President Bush in 2002, numerous TV specials and other original score compositions.

Looking to bring all his creative energies together, he founded the DreamVision Company in 2002 with his brother Vince Silanskas. Vince previously worked for Disney, and added animation – including a proprietary CGI process for animated motion pictures – to the growing list of his achievements, executive producing two highly creative shorts, "*Hooked*" in 2013 that has garnered an audience of nearly 32 million online and "*Unsung Hero*" in 2014,

the second generation of their animation production.

Logan joined DreamVision as chief creative officer five years ago – "He's my mentor," insisted Silanskas – and immediately added a new dimension to the company's burgeoning ingenuity. "It was Ron who insisted we needed a theme park to go with our other developments," Silanskas explained, "So our brand has a home. And it would be a new theme park that would literally dwarf anything in the world today and would also encompass the idea of hope and some of the other ideals that were such a strong part of Walt's vision of things.

"I was fascinated by what he (Walt Disney) created and the way he presented it. He brought pure, wholesome family entertainment to the entire family. I am humbled by Walt. He is truly a great inspiration. From the age of seven or eight, I would watch everything he did, and how he did it, and what he was doing next."

Logan is the ideal foil for Silanskas' eager enthusiasm, bringing a lifetime of Disney experience and know-how to the DreamVision table, along with his team of classic creative and management icons. His input alone gives them a credibility that demands you take notice, and he is also quietly assembling a team of theme park designers and other experts who will give their North Texas project a ringing seal of approval.

Silanskas and Logan insist most of the pieces are already in place for their grand theme park resort vision to start to take shape, but there are





A new generation of hand-drawn animation combined with their own proprietary CGI process is the bedrock of the DreamVision company, as evidenced by their 2014 short, "Unsung Hero".

obviously still parts of the puzzle that remain wrapped in mystery. They have a book of artwork for the new park that is truly dazzling, and on a scale that absolutely takes the breath away. (We were able to see some of it, but not permitted to publish it - yet.)

The DreamScape resort is centered on a truly vast mountain — dubbed DreamVision Mountain — surrounded by the traditional themed 'lands' that Walt pioneered with Disneyland in 1955, and with a strong American motif throughout. There will be themed resort hotels, of course, and an overall 'Spirit of Waltness' that should have Disney fans beating a path to the gates whenever it opens (2019 would be our best guess at the moment).

If you can imagine the epic, stirring and almost poetic style of IllumiNations: Reflections of Earth, that is the kind of effect Ron and Rick are aiming for with the DreamVision park, the center of which is Hope Springs, a core attraction that is inspired by Rick's adopted daughter Nadia. Which is where the story really starts.

Back in December 2002, Silanskas had a dream that he just could not shake, of a little girl stuck in a bombed out basement who needed his help. Together with his wife Stephanie, they pursued the dream — all the way to Russia, and a two-year-old orphan by the name of Nadia.

The experience was life-changing for Rick. "This personal experience will literally

define the rest of my life. After we got back from Russia with Nadia, I called my board together and said, 'Gentlemen, the future of this company has changed altogether. It is now about hope'."

As it turned out, Nadia is Russian for 'hope,' and that was the catalyst for DreamVision's big movie project, the animated musical "Anna," which will effectively be

Nadia's story. There will also be a live action version, "Unshakable", and a TV series, "Anna & Friends," that will continue the story.

DreamVision's production department has been in overdrive ever since, albeit with a very low-key approach at first that was centered on blending traditional animation with their new CGI techniques.

Silanskas explained, "The animation is critical to our future. What would Walt do today if he was playing with CGI? We actually went underground for almost 12 years, literally underground, so we could get it right. When we say 'Let's do it,' we really do it!

"The journey was a little crazy as we have a production team in Cape Town,

South Africa, and, at the same time, we were becoming well known for spectacular live events here in Central Florida. But, slowly but surely, we started to solidify what would be the 'brand' for DreamVision."

The DreamVision Dreamscape theme park will be the crowning glory, though, a 10,000-acre spread in Texas that will have an initial budget of some \$4 billion and be situated to catch international guests as well as domestic ones.

Logan is adamant it will be a towering achievement. "The world needs what we have to offer," he insisted. "I look at some of the things Disney is doing now and think 'What the heck are they doing?' Back in my day, you'd have got a whack on the head for some of the crazy things that are coming out.

"I know it's about making money, but you are going to make money if you come up with a quality product and if you do the right thing — things that touch the heart. With DreamVision, not only are you going to make money, but you will change the world as you do it. It all comes back to hope and the essence of what Walt would do."

So, when Texas becomes the epi-centre of the theme park world at some stage in the future, you can look back and say it all started here in Orlando — with a dream and a vision.



DreamVision's first major outing with their new animated film process was the short "Hooked", which has so far garnered almost 32 million views online.



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Resort Report





Four Seasons Resort at Golden Oak

A NEW OPTION FOR FUN AND LUXURY ON DISNEY PROPERTY

If you can't afford one of the million dollar homes in Walt Disney World's exclusive Golden Oak subdivision, there's still a way for you to see inside and even stay a few nights. It will still cost you, but hundreds is much better than million, and you'll be waited on hand and foot.

The brand new Four Seasons Orlando at Walt Disney World Resort is a posh 26-acre vacation palace that is nestled in a wetlands preserve. They offer golf, pools, dining, relaxation, fun for kids and awesome views.

The grounds in Golden Oak are very well maintained and the hotel entrance looks good, but it's not until you step inside the hotel and have a look around that you'll be really wowed. You'll notice crystal chandeliers and beautiful lighting features throughout the resort. Don't miss the custom chandelier in the entry that was designed to resemble exploding fireworks. They have a large lobby area for checking in and relaxing. You'll find creative kinds of seating areas to relax spread around the whole property. Look for the Hidden Mickey on the front of one of the desks. This is where you can speak to Disney cast members about tickets and reservations. There is also a regular concierge desk, in case you want to find out about visiting the theme parks off Disney property.

Just off of the lobby is a coffee shop named Lickety-Split. It's great for grabbing a quick coffee and



This is only part of "Explorer Island", where you'll find many fun activities.



The park view rooms offer a great view. Not only can you see the beautiful grounds and golf course, but you can see all four Disney theme parks. Above the treetops in this photo are Epcot's Spaceship Earth, Hollywood Studios' Tower of Terror and Animal Kingdom's Expedition Everest.



The rooms are well appointed with contemporary white furnishings accented with orange or teal.

snack before hitting the parks. You may want to stop here again before bedtime for a yummy gelato. Further down is the Ravello Bar, which overlooks the downstairs Ravello Italian restaurant. Although you can eat at Ravello for dinner and breakfast every day, you may want to plan on eating here for breakfast on Thursdays and Saturdays during the Good Morning Breakfast with Goofy & Pals. If you'd rather skip the kids and Goofy characters, on those days, you can also enjoy breakfast at the bar.

Other dining spots are PB&G, the pool-side BBQ bar and grill, Plancha on the golf course, and the crown jewel,

Four Seasons Resort Orlando at Walt Disney World

Capa, the Spanish steakhouse with spectacular views from the rooftop (Wishes and Illuminations anyone?).

But let's talk about where you'll be spending most of your time. The 443 guest rooms are elegant, yet still very comfortable. The rooms have everything you'd expect and more. Some of the pluses include a door bell, a small refrigerator (stocked or unstocked), coffee maker, a television in the bathroom mirror, and a well appointed desk next to a comfortable sitting area. There's also a tablet computer for looking up information, ordering hotel services or controlling some aspects of the room, such as turning on the do not disturb sign. Each room features a tub and shower

Whether you opt for a suite, a standard room, or a bit more roomy corner room, they are priced by their view. After all, you are in the middle of Disney World. The higher you go, the more you can see. Most park view rooms allow you to see all four Disney parks. All of the rooms feature balconies. Here's a tip, if you don't really need the park view, you may be able to get a Golden Oak view suite for less than a park view standard room.

There are a vast amount of fun activities to enjoy during your stay. There really is something for everyone, including many ways to cool off. The smaller pool is near the back terrace and only for adults. The zero entry main pool features a kids slide and lots of comfortable chairs to lounge in. There's also a lazy river, a splash play area and 242-foot slides on "Explorer Island". But that's not all you'll find in this fun

area designed around an "old Florida Mansion". There's volleyball, billiards, basketball, ping pong and more. This is also where you'll find the complimentary supervised indoor play area for kids 4 to 12. It's available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Elsewhere at the resort you'll find cooking classes, a tennis court and a par 71 Tranquilo Golf Club. The newly remodeled golf course used to be Disney's Osprey Ridge golf course.

You can also get in a good workout in the 3,000-square-foot fitness center. But then you may need the Spa at Four Seasons. It has the services you'd expect with an Everglades inspired design. The resort also has lots of meeting space if you're looking to mix business with pleasure.

Since it's on Disney property, the resort offers their own free transportation to the Disney parks. It leaves every half-hour for Magic Kingdom and once each hour for the other parks.

If you'd like to visit the resort without a stay, they do welcome all guests at their restaurants and spa. Be aware the resort only offers valet parking at \$26 per day, although if you're just coming to dine or visit the spa, you can get that price reduced to \$5.

If you're looking for an upscale resort with lots to do right on Disney property, give Four Seasons a try. It's a bit pricy, but if you stay during non-peak times, consider there's no daily resort fee. Plus add in all the personal services they offer, such as the free babysitting and a late departure lounge, and the many activities, and it may be your perfect fit.

Location: Golden Oak at Walt Disney World,
10100 Dream Tree Blvd., Golden Oak, Florida
Prices: Standard rooms range from \$400 to \$800 a night.
Contact: fourseasons.com/orlando or 407-313-7777



Twice a week, the Disney characters join the breakfast guests in Ravello.



There are many unique fountains and seats all around the resort.



Beyond Explorer Island is the Tranquilo golf course. You may know it by its former name, Disney's Osprey Ridge. It is open to the public as well as resort guests.

PHOTO BY QUINN ROSEBOOM

Table Service



Diagon Alley dining is as authentic as it comes in The Leaky Cauldron, which looks like it has been recreated straight from the movies. It provides a superbly atmospheric experience - and great food.



Leaky Cauldron

is a feast of wizarding delight

It's not often we get to influence a restaurant before it opens (or even after it's open!) but, among the magnificence and mastery that is Universal Orlando's new Diagon Alley area, we can claim a unique input to the menu for the Leaky Cauldron, which is the crown jewel of the food and beverage offerings in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter - Diagon Alley.

We were fortunate to be invited to a preview event in May that featured an advance look at the menu for Leaky Cauldron, Florean Fortescue's Ice Cream Parlour and the two specialty drink outlets of The Fountain of Fair Fortune and The Hopping Pot.

Along with Universal's General Manager for Resort Revenue Operations Ric Florell, Executive Chef Steven Jayson presented the first official look – and taste – of Diagon Alley, and it served as a mouth-watering preview of the excitement to come.

But, with Simon hailing from the U.K., there was one dish that didn't sit well with his British sensibilities. The Toad in the Hole dish will probably be a culinary mystery for most Universal visitors but, for a genuine Brit, it raised questions of a different kind. Like, why isn't this

exactly what he'd call Toad in the Hole.

Traditionally, this bizarre-sounding dish – that dates back to the mid-1700s – consists of whole sausages baked in a batter. What Chef Jayson had come up with was more like sausage quiche; an admirable and tasty dish, but not something most Brits would recognize. After a few quick words, the estimable head chef promised a re-think of the Cauldron's toad offering.

Fast-forward to the opening of the new Wizarding World in July, and, true to his word, Chef Jayson had indeed tweaked the recipe into a full representation of Britain's 18th century treasure. It demonstrates the lengths Universal has gone to in order to present the culinary side of Diagon Alley, and the end results are impressive.

Not only does the Cauldron feature an array of genuine pub grub, it demonstrates the essential grasp of simple-but-tasty and adds a few twists of Chef Jayson's own that make dishes like the Ploughman's Platter and Beef, Lamb and Guinness Stew highlights in their own right.

But we'll let the executive chef tell you in his own words. "When you are working with food, you have to respect the integrity of it. Coming up with dishes from Great Britain, we



have to keep it within the idea of an actual old British pub. We focused on a lot of things you might expect to see, like savory pies, stews, bangers and mash, which are ever so popular. The authenticity of it was paramount.

"The ingredients were therefore very important for the quality level as well as the authenticity level, and we were careful to make sure we had that balance when we created all the dishes."

Florell, Jayson and their team actually spent months in Britain studying what made 'pub grub' tick and ensuring the look matched the taste. In the case of their savory Cottage Pie (definitely not Shepherd's Pie, which is made with lamb; this version is a true original of ground beef, chopped carrots, mushrooms and peas baked under a mashed potato crust),





PHOTO BY SUSAN VENESS



The authenticity of the cuisine was key for Universal's Executive Chef Steven Jayson, and it is highlighted in dishes like the excellent Ploughman's Platter, left, which comfortably feeds two, and the famous Toad in the Hole, right.

they went above and beyond by adding a few flourishes with their beef stock and herbs that provided an extra depth of rich beefy, tomato flavor.

They are also rightly proud of their Ploughman's, which has taken the typical pub offering and enhanced it with a greater variety of cheeses, fresh

cornichon pickles and a crisp apple beet salad that knocks spots off anything back in dear old Blighty.

As with all the fare in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter – Hogsmeade, the Diagon Alley offerings were painstakingly refined with the author herself. Chef Jayson

added, "As well as being true to the authentic British foods, we had to find everything we could from the books themselves, so everything we did was passed back to J.K. Rowling. We flew over to Scotland and presented a lot of things to her and we

worked it all out."

Among the other dishes that passed muster with the Potter author were traditional bangers and mash (sausage and mashed potato), Fisherman's pie (a creamy mixture of salmon, shrimp, and cod under a mashed potato covering) and

I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream for Ice Cream

While Leaky Cauldron has proved suitably popular during the first few weeks of opening, some of the biggest lines have been for Diagon Alley's other dining choice – Florean Fortescue's Ice-Cream Parlour.

Here, Chef Jayson and company have really gone to town with 10 superb original flavors of hand-scooped ice-cream, plus 11 soft-serve varieties, at \$4.99 and \$5.99. You can also try some delectable sundaes at \$6.99 or the signature Eton Mess, vanilla soft-serve, strawberry topping, meringue crumbles and whipped cream, all in a souvenir glass for \$12.99.

Most will hone in on the Butterbeer Ice Cream, but we especially like the Earl Grey & Lavender (an unusual combo, but beautifully creamy) and Apple Crumble. Like your food a bit spicy? Try the Chocolate Chili – phew!





PHOTO BY SUSAN VENESS

good old fish 'n chips, featuring thick cod in a crispy beer batter.

Can't decide between the Cottage and Fisherman's pies? Have both, in a mini-pie combo that offers the best of each one. Children can try their own mini versions of the pies, as well as fish 'n chips, and Mac and Cheese.

We have quickly become addicted to the wonderful freshness of the Ploughman's Platter and the Cottage Pie, while it's also hard to pass on the Toad in the Hole (of course), which is served with a thick onion gravy, fresh vegetables and a fried tomato.

If nothing else, you should come in for the desserts, especially Chef Jayson's tour de force, the Sticky Toffee Pudding. This tribute to 100 years of British sweet-toothery is a palate-pleasing concoction of deliciousness – a dense, moist cake, if you like, and definitely not "pudding" in the American sense – drizzled with a butter-scotch-toffee sauce that may just send your tastebuds into a wizarding world of their own.

Don't overlook the drinks, either. There is Butterbeer and

Pumpkin Juice, naturally, but Chef Jayson's department has also created another four non-alcoholic options as well as two specialty brews. Dragon Scale Ale is a dark lager with a wonderfully hoppy finish while Wizard's Brew has all the body of a porter and all the taste of a chocolate stout.

Fishy Green Ale tries to be Diagon Alley's version of Butterbeer (i.e. a fun alcohol-free choice) without quite having the sweet appeal of the latter, but both the Tongue-Tying Lemon Squash and Otter's Fizzy Orange Juice are very repeatable as well as being Alley originals.

In addition to the Cauldron, all the drinks are available at The Fountain of Fair Fortune in Horizont Alley and The Hopping Pot in Carkitt Market, with the latter also serving British potato chips and Cornish pasties.

All in all, it adds up to a genuine, three-dimensional dining opportunity that fits in perfectly with the full Diagon Alley experience – especially with the proper version of Toad in the Hole!



Leaky Cauldron

Location: Universal Studios Florida

Price Range:

Breakfast: \$15.99 (\$12.39 for kids)

Lunch and Dinner

Entrees: \$8.99-\$14.99;

Ploughman's Platter (for 2), \$19.99

Kids Meals: \$6.99

Desserts: \$4.49-\$6.99

Hours: From park opening (for breakfast);

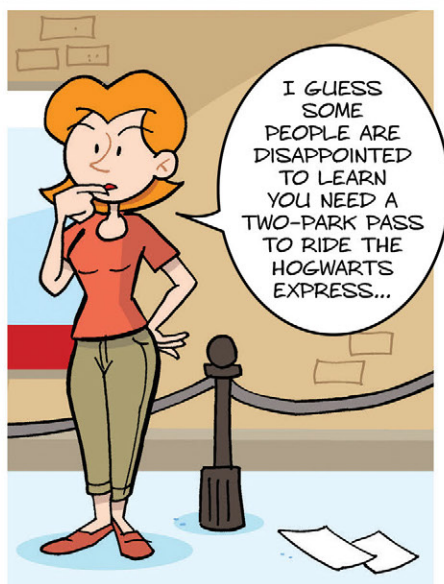
lunch/dinner from 11 a.m. until one hour before park closing.



If you can't get into The Leaky Cauldron, The Hopping Pot is a neat alternative for Diagon Alley snacks and drinks.

BEAMUSEMENT PARK

by John Green
& Pat Lewis



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Actor Tom Felton (Draco Malfoy in the Harry Potter films) took some time out during the Diagon Alley Red Carpet Premiere to take selfies with some of the fans in the park that day.

Can you find 10 differences in the bottom photo?



1. Tom Felton (center) moved his bracelet from his right wrist to his left wrist.
2. The camera man's flash cover now has two blue stripes instead of three.
3. The girl's (front center) phone cover has changed color from green to pink.
4. The man wearing a blue cap (standing behind Tom) removed the patch from the cap.
5. Tom now has a patch on his blue shirt.
6. The man (on the left side of photo wearing a blue striped shirt) has a shorter hairline.
7. The woman (on the left side of photo wearing a blue striped shirt) now has a longer shirt sleeve.
8. The man on the right side of the photo taking a photo, now has a red camera strap instead of yellow.
9. The man in the lavender shirt (front center) wearing a backpack now has a photo showing on his smart phone.
10. The man wearing a white cap (top right side of photo) now has a mustache.



The Rumor Queue:

King Kong, Wizarding World,
Epcot & More



By Fowl Owlerson

Hello, fellow theme park goers! Welcome to another crisp installment! Each issue, we sift through all the rumors blowing around the industry and deliver them to you in one convenient place.

Disclaimer: The thoughts expressed here are not purported as fact and should be viewed as hearsay until officially confirmed or denied by the companies mentioned.

It's Time to Go Back to Skull Island

A recent development took place in Universal's Islands of Adventure: the Jurassic Park arches closest to Toon Lagoon were removed. Rumors suggest their new location will be next to Thunder Falls restaurant. What for?, you might ask.

Universal Pictures recently announced a Skull Island King Kong prequel film at San Diego Comic-Con. Kong holds a special affinity with Universal Creative due to Kongfrontation's close ties to the genesis of Universal Studios Florida.

Instead of a Jurassic Park expansion, Skull Island is rumored to be a new addition to Islands of Adventure. Just beyond the former archway site rests an active construction site. The new land is said to include one major attraction set inside the vestiges of a temple. With the use of ride vehicle movements, practical effects and large 3D domes, guests may find themselves between Kong and the menagerie of Skull Island's inhabitants.

With a release set for Nov. 6, 2016, we've heard Skull Island will be open as early as late 2015 to mid-2016.

Star Trek Into Universal

A survey distributed to guests at

Universal Orlando Resort suggested several properties for use in the park, one of them being Star Trek. With Star Wars secure in Disney's grasp (and we'll get to that in a bit), Universal is bereft of a bonafide sci-fi space ride for guests.

A third Star Trek film is underway and a rumored television revival is said to also be in the works. With the franchise revitalized, Universal is said to be conceptualizing a simulator ride set in the Star Trek universe.

The attraction is said to enlist guests in Starfleet and have them take part in a mission with the Enterprise crew. It should be noted that this would be accomplished with the use of the cast from the reboot and not the original series or Next Generation. As far as where this attraction could be placed, we'd speculate Terminator 2: 3-D would make for an easier retrofit with its existing pre-show area, theater and gift shop.

A Fourth Walt Disney World Park, Epcot Revamp and Star Wars

A faint rumor has made its way from our sources: A fourth Disney World park is said to be on the table. What this park will consist of has not been disclosed. We hope to have more word on this rumored addition in the coming months.

Meanwhile, plans are being made to make major changes to Epcot's World Showcase. The hope is to reinvigorate the park with Disney's many properties. We've previously covered a Frozen attraction being conceptualized for the Norway Pavilion. Rumors suggest a Ratatouille

attraction for the France Pavilion, as well as a Studio Ghibli attraction for the Japan Pavilion.

Filming for Star Wars Episode VII is underway while plans for Episodes VIII and IX have been solidified. We've heard Disney will devote an entire land to the property – the caveat being that it'll include locations and characters from the new trilogy.

Although we're confident construction will commence, the tentative schedule for the third trilogy and spin-off films places the final installment past 2020. From what we've been told, the Star Wars expansion is still in the "blue sky" phase and may stay in it for the foreseeable future.

SeaWorld to be Sold to Comcast?

SeaWorld, Aquatica, Adventure Island and Busch Gardens are presently part of a corporation called SeaWorld Entertainment, which is a publicly traded company. Knowledgeable readers might know Blackstone Group still owns the majority of stocks. But this might change.

Universal had previously shown an interest in acquiring the parks before the sale was made to Blackstone. With Comcast owning the majority of NBCUniversal and its vow to invest hundreds of millions per year in all three parks, it's financially feasible for the resort to acquire SeaWorld Entertainment with the right offer.

If you wish to submit a rumor, offer feedback or submit an inquiry, please do so by sending an e-mail to rumors@attractionsmagazine.com. You may request to remain anonymous.



The deadline for entries is Nov. 10, 2014. One answer allowed per person, per issue. Please include your name and mailing address with your answer. Everyone who submits the correct location will go into a drawing. One person, randomly selected from all the correct entries, will win a prize. We reserve the right to publish the name, city and state of those entering. One winner per household allowed per year.

WIN A PRIZE!

Tell us which theme park area you can see this in and you may win a prize! To enter, e-mail your answer, along with your name and mailing address to mystery@attractionsmagazine.com.

Hint: This lion is one of many outside of an area filled with other creatures.



LAST ISSUE'S MYSTERY PHOTO ANSWER

Congratulations to Lindsey Pacheco from Cumberland, Rhode Island. She recognized the logo from the Light, Motors Action! Extreme Stunt Show at Disney's Hollywood Studios.



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Attractions News from Outside the Orlando Area



Holiday World Announces Launching Wing Coaster

Holiday World, Santa Claus, Ind. — Holiday World has long been known for its trio of award-winning wooden coasters: The Raven, The Legend and The Voyage. However, for many years, fans have been clamoring for a steel coaster. That wait will be over in 2015. As with their wooden coasters, The Thunderbird appears to be something special. Only the forth winged coaster to be built in the United States, it will be the first launching wing. The initial take-off will zoom riders from 0-60 mph in 3.5 seconds. The ride will invert four times. Other features include a huge 125-foot vertical loop, a 14-story Immelmann loop, a zero-g roll and a barrel roll. Common with other wing coasters will be the harrowing near-miss elements: keyholes, The Voyage (yes it overlaps the wooden coaster), woods and the ground. As with other Holiday World coasters, it will travel through wooded and hilly areas of the surrounding terrain. The Bolliger & Mabillard-designed coaster has a hefty price tag of \$22 million that more than doubles the previous largest single investment in park history. The park will open one week early in 2015, the last week in April. The ride is expected to debut at that time.



Zumanjaro Drop of Doom Opens at Six Flags Great Adventure

Six Flags Great Adventure, Jackson, N.J. — How does one go about making the tallest drop ride in the world? Well, how about constructing it within the 456-foot-tall vertical track of the world's tallest roller coaster, the 128 mph Kingda Ka? That is precisely what they did. Zumanjaro drops 415 feet at a speed of 90 mph. The ride consists of three separate eight-person gondolas that climb to the top in 30 seconds. Then there's a brief pause allowing riders to take in one of the best views of the park. The landscape quickly becomes a blur as they head back to ground level. Zumanjaro Drop of Doom opened on July 4.

Silver Dollar City Announces Fireman's Landing and Globetrotters

Silver Dollar City, Branson, Miss. — Two major announcements were made for 2015. First off, Fireman's Landing will be an entirely new \$8 million addition to the park to be constructed in a currently unused section. Opening in the spring, the area adds 10 new attractions, including six family rides and four interactive play zones for kids. The area pays tribute to firefighters and is themed after an

1880s fireman recruitment fair. The park itself is described as an "1880-style" theme park. The featured thrill ride of the area is an eight-story drop ride called FireFall. Some of the interactive areas include a water play area and a soft play area for toddlers. Secondly, in June 2015, the Harlem Globetrotters will have their first-ever extended-run show. They will perform their high-flying basketball wizardry along with their trademark comedy in 30 minute shows three times daily for six weeks.



Ratatouille Ride and Area Opens at Disneyland Paris

Disneyland Paris, Paris, France — In July, "La Place de Rémy" opened. The area is themed after the popular Disney•Pixar movie Ratatouille about the rat turned gourmet French chef. At the area's dedication, Walt Disney Parks and Resorts Chairman Tom Staggs described it this way, "La Place de Rémy celebrates one of Ratatouille's biggest stars, Paris — the culture, the architecture, and the food." He went on to say, "It's extremely fitting that our first attractions based on the award-winning film will call Disneyland Paris its home." The area will feature several themed attractions. Ratatouille — The Adventure is a ride where guests are "shrunk" to



rat size and board ratmobiles that utilize a trackless ride system. Guests then scamper through many scenes from the film. It was the 60th ride to open at Disneyland Paris. Bistrot Chez Rémy is described as an “upscale, but lighthearted” eatery. Yes, you can get ratatouille there! Chez Marianne – Souvenirs de Paris is a merchandise location that will open later this year. The Ratatouille area is the fourth Disney Pixar movie to be featured at Disneyland Paris.



Six Flags Debuts Two Coasters
Six Flags Great America, Gurnee, Ill. and Six Flags Mexico, Mexico City, Mexico – At the time our summer issue was printed, Goliath coaster near Chicago had not opened due to delays that stemmed from the record-breaking cold and snow of this past winter. About three weeks later, Goliath had its grand debut on June 19. The Rocky Mountain

Construction-designed coaster is the world’s fastest, tallest and steepest wooden coaster. Its revolutionary design allows for inversions including a zero G stall as well as high, overbanked turns in a wooden coaster. Another Rocky Mountain Construction coaster opened this summer at Six Flags, although this one is well south of the border in Mexico City. The existing Medusa coaster was transformed into a completely new ride with the addition of Rocky Mountain Construction’s IBox track. A previously wooden coaster, the new coaster inverts three times, has overbanked turns, and is faster and smoother than ever. Medusa opened a few days before Goliath on June 14.



Six Flags Closes Two Classic Wooden Coasters
Six Flags Magic Mountain, Valencia, Calif. and Six Flags New England, Agawam, Mass. – This summer, Six Flags closed two of its classic wooden coasters, one on each coast. Designed and named after the classic Cyclone roller coaster at Coney Island, The Cyclone at Six Flags New England carried its first riders June 24, 1983. Although nothing has been officially announced as to the coaster’s fate, RMC IBox track has been spotted at the construction site in plain view. Out in California, Colossus was born on June 29, 1978. At that time, it was the tallest wooden roller coaster in the world. The ride was made popular when it was used in the movie

National Lampoon’s Vacation with Chevy Chase where it was called the “Screamy Meemy”. Colossus closed to the public on Aug. 16. No plans for the site have been revealed.



Thunderbolt Opens
at Historic Coney Island
Luna Park, Coney Island, Brooklyn, N.Y. – The last custom roller coaster to be constructed at Coney Island (Cyclone) opened in 1927 and continues to run today. This summer, a new custom coaster was finally opened with an old name. The Thunderbolt name is in tribute to a wooden coaster that operated in the same location from 1925 until the early 1980s. The new Thunderbolt is vastly different from its namesake. The \$10 million steel coaster is part of a continuing effort to revitalize the Coney Island area. But, how is the ride? Well, this one is sure to please thrill seekers for years to come. It packs a lot into its two minute ride time and 2,233 foot ride length. Some features include a 90-degree vertical drop, a 100 foot vertical loop, zero-g roll and a 112-degree overbanked turn. Finally, it enters a corkscrew area with a heartline dive. It does all of this at a speed of 55 mph in single cars that hold nine riders. Thunderbolt debuted June 14.



Out of the Loop Twitter Feed

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Lights, Camera, Attraction!



Universal Studios Florida

W

e caught some of the stars of the Harry Potter films having a bit of fun in the Kings Cross train station between interviews. Here Matthew Lewis, who played Neville Longbottom, gives a lift to Oliver Phelps (or is that James?), who played one of the Weasley twins.

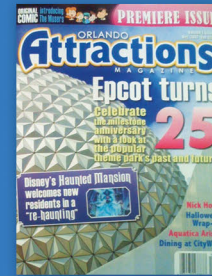


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